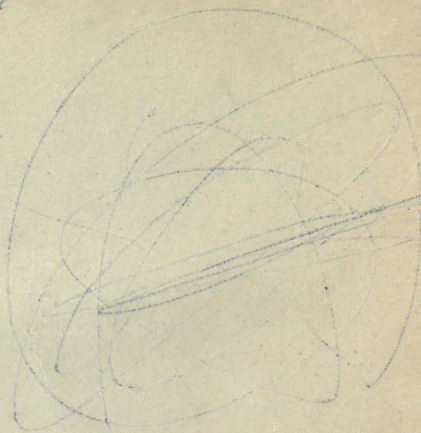




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A HISTORY OF ENGLAND.

BY
CHARLES OMAN,

FELLOW OF ALL SOULS' COLLEGE,
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"WARWICK THE KINGMAKER," "A HISTORY OF GREECE,"
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CHAPTER XII.

EDWARD II.

1307-1327.

SELDOM did a son contrast so strangely with his father as did Edward of Carnarvon with Edward the Hammer of the Scots. The mighty warrior and statesman begot a shiftless, thriftless craven, who did his best to bring to wrack and ruin all that his sire had built up. The younger Edward's character had been the cause of much misgiving to the old king during the last years of his life. He had already shown himself incorrigibly idle and apathetic, refusing to bear his share of the burdens of royalty, and wasting his time with worthless favourites. The chief of his friends was one Piers de Gaveston, a young Gascon knight, whom his father—much to his own sorrow—had made one of his household. Piers was a young man of many accomplishments, clever, brilliant, and showy, who kept a bitter tongue for all save his master, and had an unrivalled talent for making enemies. He kept the listless prince amused, and in return Edward gave him all he asked, which was no small grant, for Piers was both greedy and extravagant.

Character of
Edward II.

The new king was neither cruel nor vicious, but he was inconceivably obstinate, idle, and thriftless. It has been happily said of him that he was "the first King of England since the Conquest who was not a man of business." Hitherto the descendants of William the Norman had retained a share of their ancestor's energy; even the weak Henry III. had been a busy, bustling man, ready to meddle and muddle with all affairs of state, great or small. But Edward II. took no interest in anything; the best thing that his apologists find to say of him is that he showed some liking for farming.

The moment that his father was dead, Edward broke up the

great army that had been mustered at Carlisle, and returned home. If the campaign had been pursued, there was every chance of crushing Bruce, whose position was still most precarious, for all the fortresses of the land were held by the English, and most of the Scottish nobles still refused to join the pretender. But Edward only sent north a small force under the Earl of Pembroke, which made no head against the forces of Bruce.

**The Scottish
expedition
abandoned.**

When Edward settled down in his kingship, the English nation found itself confronted by a new problem—how to deal with a king who altogether refused to trouble himself about the governance of the realm. He referred all men who came to him to his “good brother Piers,” and went about his pleasures without further concern. When, a few months after his accession, he was to wed Isabel, the daughter of the King of France, he went over-sea, leaving the regency in the hands of the Gascon upstart, whom he created Earl of Cornwall, granting him the old royal earldom that had been held by the descendants of Richard, the brother of Henry III. He also gave him in marriage his niece, the daughter of the Earl of Gloucester, and lavished upon him a number of royal estates.

**Ascendency
of Piers
Gaveston.**

Baronage and people alike were moved to wrath by seeing the king hand over the governance of the realm to his favourite. The proud nobles who had been content to bend before Edward’s father, would not for a moment yield to a king who was but the creature of Gaveston. Troubles began almost immediately on the young king’s accession; he was besought, in and out of Parliament, to dismiss the Gascon. He bowed before the storm, and sent him out of England for the moment—but only to give him higher honours by making him Lord Deputy of Ireland. When the king recovered from his fright, Gaveston was recalled, and returned more powerful and more arrogant than before (1309).

Meanwhile the war in Scotland was going very badly. Many of the nobles, after long doubting, joined Bruce, because they saw that they were likely to get little protection from the feeble king whom they had hitherto served. Several important places fell into the insurgents’ hands, and it was universally felt that only a great expedition headed by the king himself could stay Bruce’s progress.

**The Scottish
war.**

Edward, however, was enduring too much trouble at home to think of reconquering Scotland. The barons were moving again, headed by three personal enemies of Gaveston's, whom he is said to have mortally offended by the nicknames he had bestowed on them. The first was the king's cousin,* Thomas, Earl of Lancaster, a turbulent, ambitious man, who covered a scheming love of power by an affectation of patriotism and disinterestedness. The other two were Aymer de Valence, Earl of Pembroke,† and Guy Beauchamp, Earl of Warwick. Gaveston's name for Lancaster was "The Actor," which, indeed, well hit off his pretence of unreal virtue. Pembroke he called "Joseph the Jew," and Warwick "The Black Dog of Arden."

It was these three lords who in 1310 led an attack in Parliament on the king and his favourite, and drew up a scheme for taking the direct rule of the realm out of their hands. Following the precedent of the Provisions of Oxford,‡ the Parliament named a committee of regency, or body of ministers, composed of twenty-one members, who were called the Lords Ordainers, and were to draw up a scheme for the reform of all the abuses of the kingdom. The twenty-one comprised the Archbishop of Canterbury and all the leading men of England, but Thomas of Lancaster and his friends had the ascendancy among them. The king complained that he was treated like a lunatic, and deprived of the right that every man owns, of being allowed to manage his own household. He resolved by way of protest, to show that he could do something useful, and, taking Gaveston with him, made an incursion into Scotland. Bruce was cautious, and retired northward, burning the country behind him. The king struggled on as far as the Forth, and then turned back without having accomplished anything. On his return he was forced to sign a promise to redress many administrative grievances which the Lords Ordainers laid before him—to consent to banish Gaveston, choose all his ministers with the counsel and consent of his baronage, disallow all customs and taxes save such as Parliament should grant, and reform the administration of justice. Edward signed everything readily, but immediately departed

**The Lords
Ordainers.**

* Son of Edward I.'s brother Edmund, Earl of Lancaster.

† A grandson of one of Henry III.'s foreign relatives.

‡ See p. 140.

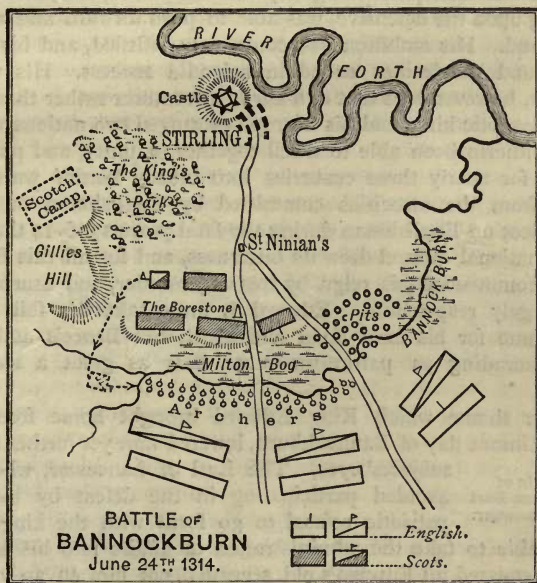
into the north, bade Gaveston return to England and join him, and published a repudiation of the new ordinances, as forced on him by threats and violence (1311).

This contumacy brought matters to a head. Lancaster and his friends took arms and laid siege to Scarborough, where the favourite lay. Gaveston surrendered on a promise that he should have a fair trial in Parliament. But while he was being taken southward, the Earl of Warwick came upon his keepers, drove them away, and took Piers out of their hands. Without trial or form of justice, "The Black Dog of Arden" bade his retainers behead the favourite by the wayside on Blacklow Hill (May, 1312). Thomas of Lancaster approved by his presence this gross and faithless violation of the terms on which Gaveston had surrendered at Scarborough.

This outburst of lawless baronial vengeance removed Edward's favourite, but did the realm no other good. The king was compelled to pardon Gaveston's murderers, but he could not be forced to forget what they had done, and even his slow and craven heart conceived projects of revenge. But these had to be postponed for a time to the pressing needs of the Scotch war. Bruce had taken Perth in 1312, Edinburgh and Roxburgh fell to him in the following year, and he was besieging Stirling, the last important stronghold still in English hands. Even Edward was stirred: he bade all England arm, and vowed to march to the relief of Stirling in the next spring. A great host mustered under the royal banner, but Thomas of Lancaster factiously refused to appear, on the plea that the ordinances of 1311 forbade the king to go out to war without the consent of Parliament. This act alone is a sufficient proof that Thomas was a mere self-seeking politician, and not the patriot that he would fain have appeared.

King Edward, with an army that is rated at nearly 100,000 men by the chronicler, pushed on to relieve Stirling, and met no opposition till he reached the burn of Bannock, two miles south of that town. There he found Bruce and his host of 40,000 men posted on a rising ground, with the brook and a broad bog in his front. On their flanks the Scots had protected themselves by digging many pits lightly covered with earth and brushwood, so as to break the charge of the English

horse. Edward displayed all the marks of a bad general : instead of endeavouring to use his superior numbers to turn or surround the enemy, he flung them recklessly on the Scottish front. When his archers, who by themselves might have settled the battle, had been driven away by the Scots horse, he pushed his great array of mailed knights against the solid masses of Bruce's infantry. After struggling through brook and bog,



the English came to a standstill before the steady line of spears. Charge after charge was made, but the knights could not break through the sturdy pikemen, and at last recoiled in disorder. At this moment a mass of Scottish camp-followers came rushing over the hill on the left, and were taken by the exhausted English for a new army. Edward's great host broke up and fled, the king himself outstripping his followers, and never halting till he reached Dunbar. The Earl of Gloucester, six other barons, two hundred knights, and many thousand men of

lower rank were left upon the field. The Earls of Hereford and Angus, and seventy knights were taken prisoners.

The fight of Bannockburn completely did away with the last chance of the union of England and Scotland. The English garrisons surrendered, and the Scots of the English party yielded themselves to Bruce, save a few who, with the Earls of Athole and Buchan, took refuge south of the border. For the future Bruce was undisputed king beyond the Tweed, and, instead of acting upon the defensive, was able to push forward and attack England. His ambition was completely satisfied, and his long toils and wanderings ended in splendid success. His whole career, however, was that of a hardy adventurer rather than that of a patriotic king, and his triumph estranged two nations which had hitherto been able to dwell together in amity, and plunged them for nearly three centuries into bloody border wars. It was from the atrocities committed by Englishman on Scot and Scot on Englishman during the fatal years 1306-14 that the long national quarrel drew its bitterness, and for all this Bruce, who commenced his reign by treason, murder, and usurpation, is largely responsible. Edward I. must take his full share of blame for his hard hand and heart, but Bruce's ambition masquerading as patriotism must bear as great a load of guilt.

The shame which King Edward brought home from the ignominious day of Bannockburn, lowered him yet further in his subjects' eyes. The Earl of Lancaster, who had avoided participating in the defeat by his unpatriotic refusal to go forth with the king, was now able to take the administration of affairs into his hands. He dismissed all Edward's old servants, put him on an allowance of £10 a day for his household expenses, and for some years was practically ruler of the realm.

Lancaster might have passed for an able man if he had not laid his hand on the helm of the state; but he guided matters so badly that he soon wrecked his own reputation both for ability and for patriotism (1314-18). The generals of the Scottish king

War in
Ireland.

crossed the border and ravaged the country as far as York and Preston, and at the same time Edward Bruce, the brother of Robert, sailed over to Ireland with an army and began to raise the native Irish against their

rulers. The great tribes of the O'Neils and the O'Connors joined him, in the hope of completely expelling the English, and by their aid Edward Bruce was crowned King of Ireland, and swept over the whole country from Antrim to Kerry, burning the towns and castles of the English settlers. It is from these unhappy years (1315-17) that we may date the weakening of the royal authority in Ireland, and the restriction of English rule to the eastern coast—"the Pale" about Dublin, Dundalk, and Wicklow. When the war seemed over, and the victory of Edward Bruce certain, the dissensions of the Irish ruined his cause. Lord Mortimer routed Edward's allies the O'Connors at Athenree in 1317, and the King of Ireland himself and his Scottish followers were cut to pieces at Dundalk, a year later, by the Chief Justice, John de Birmingham. Dublin and the Pale were thus saved, but little or no progress was made in restoring the King of England's authority in the rest of the land.

Though victorious in Ireland, the English under Lancaster's rule were unable to keep their own borders safe. Bruce took Berwick, ravaged Durham, and cut the whole shire-levy of Yorkshire to pieces at Mytton bridge. In despair, Lancaster asked for a truce, and obtained it (1320). But the temporary cessation of the Scottish war only gave the opportunity for the English to come to blows in civil strife. Thomas of Lancaster had by this time made so many enemies, that the king was able to gather together a party against him: though slow and idle, Edward was unforgiving, and well remembered that he had Gaveston's blood to avenge. He found his chief supporters in the two Despensers, West-country barons, the son and grandson of that Despenser who had been Simon de Montfort's Justiciar, and had fallen at Evesham. Taking advantage of the times, Edward assembled an army under the plea that he must chastise a baron named Baddlesmere, who had rudely excluded Queen Isabella from Leeds Castle, in Kent, when she wished to enter. Having taken Leeds and hung its garrison, the king with a most unexpected show of energy suddenly turned on Lancaster. Earl Thomas called out his friends, and the Earl of Hereford, Lord Mortimer, and many of the barons of the Welsh Marches rose in his favour. He was forced, however, to fly north when the king pursued him, and had made his way as far as Boroughbridge, in

Bruce invades
England.—
Edward re-
covers power.

Yorkshire, when he found himself intercepted by the shire-levies of the north, headed by Harclay, the Governor of Carlisle. A battle followed, in which Hereford was slain and Lancaster taken prisoner.

The king was now able to wreak his long-delayed vengeance for Gaveston's murder. He sent Earl Thomas to the block, and hung or beheaded eight barons and thirty knights of his party. Lord Mortimer and the rest were stripped of their lands and banished. These wholesale executions and confiscations not only provoked the baronage, but caused the nation to look on Earl Thomas as a martyr, though he was in fact nothing better than a selfish and turbulent adventurer.

Edward, having taken his revenge, subsided into his former listlessness and sloth, handing over the whole conduct of affairs to his new ministers, the two Despensers. Father and son alike were unwise, greedy, and arrogant ; they used the king's name for their own ends, and soon made themselves as well hated as Gaveston had been ten years before. Yet for four years they maintained themselves in power, even after they had advised the king to take the necessary but unpopular step of acknowledging Bruce as King of Scotland, and concluding a truce for thirteen years with him.

The slothful Edward and the arrogant Despensers soon tired out the patience of England, and they fell before the first blow levelled against them. The blow came from an unexpected quarter. Edward's wife, Isabella of France, was visiting the court of her brother, Charles IV., on a diplomatic mission concerning some frontier feuds in Guienne. At Paris she met and became desperately enamoured of the exiled Marcher-baron, Roger Mortimer. He drew her into a conspiracy against her husband ; by his advice she induced her young son Edward, the heir of England, to cross over and join her. When the boy was safely in her hands, she sent to King Edward to bid him dismiss the Despensers, because they had wronged and insulted her. When he refused, she and Mortimer gathered a force of Flemish mercenaries and crossed to England. They had already enlisted the support of the kinsmen and friends of Lancaster, Hereford, Baddlesmere,

Vengeance
of
Edward, 1322.

Rule of the
Despensers,
1322-26.

Queen Isabella
and Mortimer.
—Fall of the
Despensers.

and the other barons who had been slain in 1322. On landing in Suffolk, Isabella was at once joined by them, and found herself at the head of a large army. Edward and his unpopular ministers fled towards Wales; but the elder Despenser was caught at Bristol and promptly hanged. His son Hugh and the king were captured three weeks later; the former was executed, while his master was taken under guard to London (November, 1326).

The queen then summoned a Parliament in the name of her son, Prince Edward. Articles were placed before it, accusing the king of breaking his coronation oath, of wilfully neglecting the right governance of the land, of promoting unworthy favourites, of losing Scotland and Ireland, and of slaying his enemies without just cause or a fair trial. The Parliament pronounced him unfit to reign, deposed him, and elected his young son to fill his throne in his stead.

Edward was constrained by force to resign his crown, and at once thrown into prison. He was first consigned to the charge of Henry of Lancaster, the brother of Earl Thomas; but Henry kept him safely, and there were those who did not desire his safety. Presently the queen and Mortimer took him from Lancaster's hands and removed him to Berkeley Castle. There he was treated with gross neglect and cruelty, in the deliberate design of ending his life; but when his constitution proved strong enough to resist all privations, his keepers secretly put him to death (September 21, 1327).

Thus ended the unhappy son of Edward I., the victim of an unfaithful wife, and a knot of barons bent on revenging an old blood-feud. That he deserved his fate it would be hard to say, but that he owed it entirely to his own unwise choice of favourites it is impossible to deny.

Edward deposed.—His son proclaimed king.

Death of Edward.

CHAPTER XIII.

EDWARD III.

1327-1377.

SHAMEFUL as the state of the realm had been under the rule of Edward of Carnarvon and his favourites, a yet more disgraceful depth was reached in the years of minority of his son. The young king was only fourteen, and the government fell into the hands of those who had set him on the throne, his mother and her paramour, Roger Mortimer. A council, headed by Henry Earl of Lancaster, was supposed to guide the king's steps, but as a matter of fact he was in Queen Isabella's power, while she was entirely ruled by Mortimer. They were surrounded by a guard of 180 knights, and acted as they pleased in all things. It was only gradually that the nation realized the state of affairs, for the murder of Edward II. was long kept concealed, and the relations of the queen and Mortimer were not at first generally known.

The first blow to the new government was the renewal of the Scottish war. In 1328, Robert Bruce broke the truce that he had made six years before. He was now growing advanced in age, and was stricken by leprosy, but he sent out, under James "the Black Douglas," a great host, 4000 knights and squires, and 20,000 moss-troopers, all horsed on shaggy Galloway ponies. They harried England as far as the Tees, and successfully eluded Mortimer, who went out against them, taking the young king with him. Outmarching the English day by day, Douglas retired before them across the Northumbrian fells, occasionally harassing his pursuers by night-attacks ; he returned home with much plunder, leaving not a cow unlifted nor a house unburnt in all Tynedale. The English host came back foiled and half starved, and Mortimer, not daring

Second Scottish
invasion.—
"The Shameful
Peace."

to face another campaign, advised the queen to make terms with the Scots. Accordingly "the Shameful Peace" was signed at Northampton, by which England resigned all claims of suzerainty over the Scotch realm, sent back the crown and royal jewels, which Edward I. had carried off to London, and gave the king's sister Joanna to be wed to Bruce's eldest son (1328).

Mortimer's failure led to insurrections against him; but they were mere baronial risings, not efforts of the whole people. Henry of Lancaster, who headed the first, was put down and heavily fined for his pains. Edmund, Earl of Kent, then took up the same plan, announcing that he would free his half-brother Edward II., who, as he was persuaded, still survived. But he fell into Mortimer's hands, and was beheaded.

It was the young king himself who was destined to put an end to the misrule of his mother and her minion. When he reached the age of eighteen, and realized the shameful tutelage in which he was being held, he resolved to free himself from it by force. While the court lay at Nottingham Castle in October, 1330, he gathered a small band of trustworthy adherents, and at midnight entered the queen's lodgings by a secret stair and seized Mortimer, in spite of his mother's tears and curses. The favourite was sent before his peers, tried, and executed; Isabella was relegated to honourable confinement at Castle-Rising, where she lived for many years after.

King Edward now himself assumed the reins of government; he was still very young, but in the middle ages men ripened quick if they died early, and Edward at nineteen was thought both by others and himself enough to take charge of the policy of the realm. He was in his youth a very well-served and well-loved sovereign, for he had all the qualities that attract popularity—a handsome person, pleasant and affable manners, a fluent tongue, and an energy that contrasted most happily with the listless indolence of his miserable father. It was many years before the world discovered that he was selfish, thriftless, reckless of his country's needs, and set on gratifying his personal ambition and love of warlike feats to the sacrifice of every other consideration. He was a

Risings against
Mortimer.

The king
asserts himself
—Mortimer
executed.

Character of
Edward III.

knight-errant of the type of Richard Coeur-de-Lion, not a statesman and warrior like his grandfather Edward I. In his later years his faculties showed a premature decay, and he fell into the hands of favourites, male and female, who were almost as offensive as the Gavestons and Despencers of the previous generation.

Edward's reign falls into three well-marked periods: the first, 1330-39, is that of his Scottish wars; the second, 1339-60, is that in which he began the famous and unhappy "Hundred Years' War" with France, and himself conducted it up to the brilliant but unwise Peace of Bretigny; the third, 1360-77, that of his declining years, is a time of trouble and misgovernment gradually increasing till Edward sank unregretted into his grave.

Robert Bruce, the terror of the English, had died in 1329, leaving his throne to his son David II., a child of five years.

War with Scotland.—Battle of Halidon Hill. The government fell into the hands of regents, who ill supplied the place of the dead king, and their weakness tempted the survivors of the English party in Scotland to strike a blow. Edward Balliol, the son of the long-dead John Balliol, accordingly made secret offers to Edward III., that he would do homage to him for the Scottish crown, and reign as his vassal, if he were helped to win the land. With Edward's connivance the young Balliol gathered together the Earls of Buchan and Athole, and many other Scottish refugees in England, and took ship to Scotland. He landed in Fife, was joined by his secret friends, beat the regent, the Earl of Mar, and seized the greater part of Scotland. He was crowned at Scone, and forced the young David Bruce to flee over-sea to France to save his life. But soon the national party rose against Balliol, expelled him, and chased him back to England. Edward then took the field in his favour, and met the Scots at Halidon Hill, near Berwick. Here he inflicted on them a crushing defeat, which the English celebrated as a fair revenge for the blow of Bannockburn, for the regent Archibald Douglas, four earls, and many thousand men were left on the field. They fell mainly by the arrows of the English archery, for, having drawn themselves out on a hillside behind a marsh, they stood as a broad target for the bowmen, whom they were unable to reach. The intervening marshy ground prevented

their heavy columns of pikemen from advancing, and they were routed without even the chance of coming to handstrokes (July, 1333). This victory made Edward Balliol King of Scotland for a second time ; he did homage to his champion, and ceded to him Tweeddale and half Lothian. But the crown won by English help sat uneasily on Balliol's brow. After several years of spasmodic fighting, he was finally driven out of his realm, and took refuge again in England. This time he found less help, for Edward III. was now plunged deep in schemes of another kind.

Nine years of comparative quiet had done much to recover England from the misery it had known in the last reign. The baronage and people were serving the young king loyally, taxation had not yet been heavy, and the success of Halidon Hill had restored the nation's self-respect. Edward himself was flushed by victory and burning for fresh adventures. Hence it came that, neglecting the nearer but less showy task of restoring the English suzerainty over Scotland, he turned to wars over-sea.

One of the usual frontier-quarrels between French and Gascons had broken out in 1337 on the borders of Aquitaine. In consequence, Philip VI. of France had, like so many of his predecessors, taken measures to support Edward's Scottish enemies, and given shelter to the exiled boy-king, David Bruce. War between England and France was probably inevitable, but Edward chose to make it a life and death struggle, by laying claim to the throne of France and branding Philip VI. as a usurper.

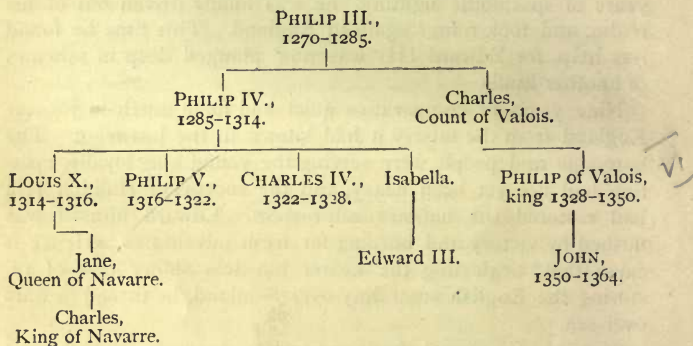
Quarrel with France.—The Hundred Years' War begins.

The question of the French succession dated from some years back. In 1328 died Edward's uncle, King Charles IV., the last of the direct male descendants of Philip IV. The problem then cropped up for the first time whether the French crown could descend to females, or whether the next male heir must be chosen, although he was but the cousin of the late king. The peers of France adjudged that by the *Salic Law*, an old custom ascribed to the ancient Franks, only male descent counted in tracing claims to the throne. Accordingly they adjudged the kingdom to Philip of Valois, who was crowned as Philip VI. Edward, as own nephew

The French succession.—The Salic Law.

through his mother to Charles IV., had protested at the time ; but he had practically withdrawn his protest by doing homage to Philip for the Duchy of Aquitaine, and thereby acknowledging the justice of the award.

THE FRENCH SUCCESSION, 1337.



Now, in 1337 Edward began to think of reviving his dormant pretensions to the French crown, though they had two fatal defects. The first was that there had never been any precedent in France for a claim through the female line. The second was that, even if such descents could be counted, one of his mother's brothers had left a daughter, the Queen of Navarre, and the son of that princess had a better female claim than Edward himself. The only way in which this defect could be ignored was by pleading, like Bruce in 1292, that Edward was a generation nearer to the old royal stock than his cousin, Charles, King of Navarre.

On this rather futile plea Edward laid solemn claim to the French crown, and declared Philip of Valois a usurper. Perhaps there may be truth in the story which tells that he did not do so from any strong belief in his own theory, but because the Flemings, vassals to the French crown, had declared that they could not aid him, though willing to do so, on account of oaths of fealty sworn to the King of France. If Edward claimed to be king himself, they said, their allegiance and help would be due to

Edward claims
the French
crown.

him. Whether the tale be true or not, he at any rate made the claim.

In reliance on the assistance of the Flemings, and of their neighbours the Dukes of Brabant and Holland, and with the countenance of the Emperor, Lewis of Bavaria, King Edward determined to land in the Low Countries and attack France from the north. He called out great bodies of soldiery, and took advantage of the devotion that the nation felt for him to raise illegal taxes for their pay. Violating his grandfather's engagements, he took a "tallage" from the towns, and levied a "maltolt" or extra customs-duty on the export of wool. In the excitement of the moment, little opposition was made to these high-handed measures.

But Edward's campaign against France proved utterly unsuccessful ; his Netherland allies were of little use to him, King Philip refused to risk a battle in the field, and an attack on Cambray was defeated. Edward had to return to England to raise more money ; while at home, he heard that a great French fleet had been collected for the conquest of Flanders and a subsequent attack on England. Hastily raising all the ships he could gather from London and the Cinque Ports, the king set sail to seek the enemy. He found them in harbour at the Flemish port of Sluys, and there brought them to action. They had chained their ships in three lines and built up barricades upon them ; but, by pretending to fly, Edward induced them to cast loose and follow him, and, when they had got out to sea, turned and attacked. The English archery swept the enemy's decks, and then the king and his knights clambered up, and boarded vessel after vessel till well-nigh the whole French fleet was taken (1340). No such glorious day had been seen since Hubert de Burgh won the battle off Dover 120 years before.

The victory of Sluys freed England from the danger of invasion, but did nothing more. For when the king landed in Flanders, and pushed forward against France, he again failed to break through the line of strong towns that guarded Philip's frontier, and had to return home foiled. On coming to England he fell into a bitter strife with his Parliament, who were far from contented with the repeated checks in Flanders. Edward began by charging his failure on

First cam-
paign.—Naval
victory off
Sluys.

Contest with
Parliament.

his ministers and dismissed them all, from the Chancellor and the Archbishop of Canterbury downwards, accusing them of having misappropriated the taxes. He announced that he would bring them to trial, and appointed a special commission for the purpose. This led to a vindication of the ancient right of trial by a man's equals, for John de Stratford, the archbishop, insisted on being tried in Parliament by the barons his peers, and carried his point against the king's strenuous opposition. He was of course acquitted, as nothing could be found against him. The Parliament only consented to grant the king fresh supplies when he swore (1) to let them appoint a committee to audit the accounts of the money ; (2) to take no further *maltolts* or tallages, but confine himself to the duly voted supplies ; (3) to choose his ministers only with Parliament's consent, and make them answerable to Parliament for malfeasance in their office (1341). If these conditions had been kept, the crown would have been completely under control of the national council, but Edward shamelessly broke them when fortune turned in his favour.

England had now been five years at war with France, and had gained nothing thereby save the destruction of the French

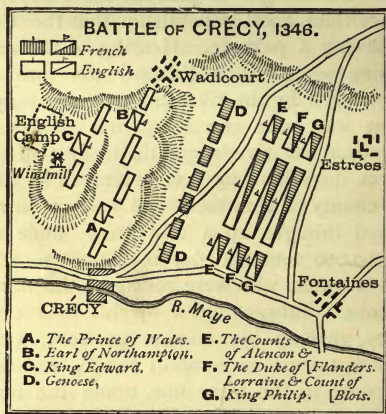
Edward in- navy at Sluys. France had fared equally badly,
vades Nor- and in a lucid moment the kings signed a truce.
mandy.—

Battle of Crecy. But both Edward and Philip and their subjects had come to dislike each other so bitterly, that no end could be put to the war till one or other had gained a decisive victory. The struggle was soon renewed on fresh ground—the duchy of Brittany, where a disputed succession had occurred. With strange want of logic, Philip VI. backed the claimant whose pretensions were based on a female descent, and Edward the one who claimed as next male heir under the Salic Law. Thus each supported in Brittany the theory of descent which he repudiated in France. After much indecisive fighting, both in Brittany and on the Gascon border, Edward determined on a new invasion of France in 1345. Giving out that he would sail to Bordeaux, he really landed near Cherbourg, in Normandy, where the enemy was not expecting him. He had determined to fight the campaign with English forces alone, and no longer to rely on untrustworthy continental friends. With 4000 men-at-arms, 10,000 bowmen, and 5000 light Welsh and Irish infantry, he

pushed boldly through the land, sacking St. Lo and Caen, and driving the local levies of Normandy before him. But he had cut himself loose from the sea, and as his course drew him into the interior, the French began to muster on all sides of him in great numbers and in high wrath. It was evident that he ran great danger of being surrounded, and would certainly have to fight for his life. When he reached the Seine, King Philip broke down all the bridges to prevent his escape, and it was more by chance than good generalship that the English army succeeded in forcing a passage. Hearing of the vast numbers that were coming against him, Edward now turned north, but he was again checked by the river Somme, and only got across by fighting his way over the dangerous sea-swept ford of Blanchetaque, near the river's mouth, in face of the levies of Picardy. Three days later he was overtaken by the French at Crecy, in the county of Ponthieu, and had to turn and fight. King Philip had brought up a vast army, some 12,000 men-at-arms and 60,000 foot-soldiers, including several thousand Genoese cross-bowmen, who were reckoned the best mercenary troops in Europe. Edward drew up his host on a hillside, north of Crecy, placing his archers in front, with bodies of dismounted men-at-arms to support them; two-thirds of the army were arrayed in the front line, under the nominal command of Edward, Prince of Wales, the fifteen-year-old son and heir of the king. Edward kept the rest in reserve higher up the hill, under his own hand.

Crecy was the first fight which taught the rulers of the continent the worth of the English bowman. When the vast French army came up against them, they easily repelled every attack. First, they riddled with The English archers. arrows the Genoese cross-bowmen, who could make no stand against them, for the archer could shoot six times before the Genoese could wind up their clumsy arbalests for a second discharge. Then when the French chivalry advanced, they shot down men and horses so fast that it was only at a few points that the enemy ever succeeded in reaching their line, and coming to handstrokes with the Prince of Wales and his dismounted knights. At evening the French fled, routed by less than a third of their numbers, before King Edward and his reserve had occasion to strike a single blow. Edward knighted

his son on the field—the first victory of the celebrated “Black Prince,” who was to prove as good a soldier as his father. When the French dead were counted, it was discovered that the English archery had slain 11 dukes and counts, 83 barons, 1200 knights, and more than 20,000 of the French soldiery. John, King of Bohemia, who had come to help Philip VI., though he was old and weak of sight, was also



among the slain. On the other hand, the English had lost less than a thousand men (August 26, 1346).

After this splendid victory, King Edward was able to march unmolested through the land. He resolved to end the campaign by taking Calais, the nearest French seaport to the English coast, and one which, if held permanently, would give him an ever-open door into France.

Accordingly, he sat down before Calais, and beleaguered it for many months, till it fell by famine in the next year. The King of France could do nothing to relieve it, and the town had to yield at discretion. The men of Calais had made many piratical descents on England, and Edward was known to bear them a grudge for this. Therefore seven chief burgesses of the place gallantly came forward to bear the brunt of his wrath, and offered themselves to him with halters round their necks, begging him to hang them, but spare

the rest of their townsmen. Edward was at first inclined to take these patriotic citizens at their word, but his wife Queen Philippa urged him to gentler counsels, and he let them go. But he drove out of Calais every man who would not own him as king and swear him fealty, and filled their places with English colonists. Thus Calais became an English town, and so remained for more than 200 years, a thorn in the side of France, and an open gate for the invader from beyond the Channel.

While the siege of Calais had been in progress, the Scots had made a bold attempt to invade the north of England. The young king, David Bruce, grateful for the shelter which Philip VI. had given him in the days of his exile, had crossed the Tweed, in the hope of drawing Edward home, and so robbing him of the results of his campaign in France. But Queen Philippa summoned to her aid all the nobles who had not gone over-sea, and mustered them at Durham. David Bruce pushed forward to meet them, but at Neville's Cross he met with a crushing defeat. Once more it was found that the Scottish pikemen could not stand against the English archery. They were beaten with terrible loss, and the king himself and many of his nobles were taken prisoners and sent to London (October, 1346).

Scottish invasion.—Battle of Neville's Cross.

Edward came back from Calais to England laden with glory and spoil, but all his plunder could not pay for the exhaustion which his heavy taxes and levies of men had brought upon his realm. The nation, however, was blinded to its loss by the glory of Crecy, and the war would probably have been continued with increased energy but for a fearful disaster which befell the land in the year after the fall of Calais. A great plague which men called "the Black Death" came sweeping over Europe from the East, and in the awful havoc which it caused wars were for a time forgotten. England did not suffer worse than France or Italy, yet it is calculated that a full half of her population was stricken down by this unexampled pestilence. Manor-rolls and bishops' registers bear out by their lists in detail the statements which the contemporary chroniclers make at large. We note that in this unhappy year, 1348-9, many parishes had three, and some four successive vicars appointed to them in nine months. We see how, in small villages of 300 or 400 inhabitants, thirty or

The Black Death.

1347

forty families, from their oldest to their youngest member, were swept away, so that their farms reverted to the lord of the land for want of heirs. We find monasteries in which every soul, from the prior to the youngest novice, died, so that the house was left entirely desolate. And thus we realize that the chroniclers are but telling us sober, unexaggerated facts, when they speak of this as a pestilence such as none had ever seen before, and none is ever like to see again. It seems to have been an eruptive form of that oriental plague which still lingers in Syria and the valley of the Euphrates. It began with great boils breaking out on the groin or under the armpits, culminated in sharp fever and violent retching, and generally carried off its victims within two days.

It is probable that England did not recover the loss of population which it now sustained for a couple of centuries. But if the nation was dreadfully thinned, the results of the plague were not all in the direction of evil. It certainly raised the position of the lower classes by making labour more scarce, and therefore more valuable. The surviving agricultural labourers were able to demand much higher wages than before, and it was in vain that Parliament, by the foolish *Statute of Labourers* (1349), tried to prescribe a maximum rate of wages for them, and to prevent employers giving more. Legislation is unable to prevent the necessary working of the laws of political economy, and in spite of the statute the peasant got his advantage.

About the time of the outbreak of the Black Death, the kings of England and France had signed a truce, being moved to turn their thoughts far from war by the terrible havoc that was going on around them. It was six years before they and their peoples could find heart to forget the plague, and once more resumed their reckless struggle. In 1355 Edward made proposals for a definitive peace to King John—Philip VI. had died in 1350—on the terms that he should give up his claims to the French crown, but receive Aquitaine free from all burden of homage to the King of France as suzerain. John refused this reasonable offer, and Edward recommenced his attacks on France. He himself landed at Calais and invaded Picardy, but was ere long recalled home by the news that the Scots also had renewed the war, and were over the Tweed. Edward spent the summer in beating them

Rise in wages.
—The Statute of
Labourers.

Renewal of the
French war.—
The Black
Prince.

back and cruelly ravaging the whole of Lothian. Meanwhile, his son, the Black Prince, now a young man of twenty-five, started from Bordeaux and plundered the French province of Languedoc.

In the following year, the Black Prince made a similar incursion into Central France, and swept through the whole country from Limoges to Tours with a small army of 4000 mounted men and 3000 archers. When he turned his face homeward, however, he found that King John with a host of 40,000 men had blocked his road, by getting between him and Bordeaux. Thus intercepted, Prince Edward posted himself on the hill of Maupertuis, near Poitiers, and took up a defensive position. It is probable that the French, with their vastly superior numbers, could have completely surrounded him and starved him into surrender without any need of fighting. But King John, a fierce and reckless prince with none of a general's ability, preferred to take the English by force of arms, and, when they refused to surrender to him, prepared to storm their position.

Edward's small army was drawn up behind a tall hedgerow and a ditch on the slope of a ridge, with the archers in front lining the hedgerow, and the men-at-arms behind them. All the latter save 300 were dismounted, as at Crecy. The Earls of Salisbury and Warwick had command of the two divisions which formed the front line, while the prince himself stayed behind with the reserve. John of France, remembering the disaster of Crecy, where the English arrows had slain so many horses, dismounted all his knights save a few hundred, and led them on foot up the hill in three divisions. Only a picked body of horsemen, under the two marshals, D'Audrehem and Clermont, pushed forward in front, to endeavour to ride down the English archers, as the Scottish cavalry had done so successfully at Bannockburn.

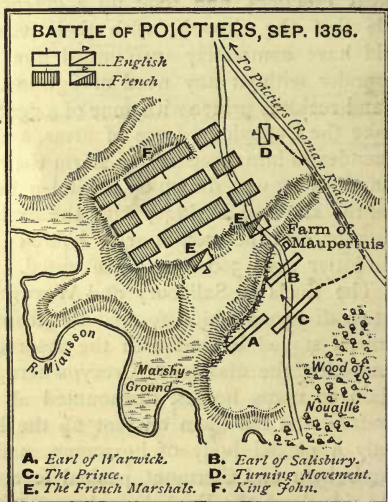
But, whether on foot or on horse, the French made little way with their attack. The cavalry in advance were all shot down as they tried to push through gaps in the hedge. The first division of the dismounted knights then climbed the slope, but, after severe fighting with the front line of the English, recoiled, unable to force their way over the ditch. They fell back on to the second line behind them, and put it into disorder before it could come near the

*The Battle of
Poitiers.*

*Rout of the
French.—King
John a prisoner.*

1356

English. Seeing two-thirds of the French army in this plight, the Prince of Wales resolved to strike a bold blow : he brought up his reserve to the front, and bade his whole army charge downhill on to the huddled mass below them. His quick eye had caught the right moment, for the whole of the French van and second division fled right and left without fighting. Only King John, with the rear line of his army, stood firm. With this body, one more numerous than the whole of his own host, Prince Edward had a fierce fight in the valley. But the French were broken in spirit by the sight of the rout of their van, and gave way when they were charged in the flank by a small body



of troops whom Edward had detached to his right for that purpose. They all fled save the king and his young son Philip, who stood their ground for a long time with a small company of faithful vassals, and maintained the fight when all the rest had vanished. John's courageous obstinacy had the natural result : he, his son, and the faithful few about him were all surrounded and taken prisoners. When the English came to reckon up the results of the battle, they found that they had slain 2 dukes, 17 barons, and 2800 knights and men-at-arms,

and taken captive a king, a prince, 13 counts, 15 barons, and 2000 knights and men-at-arms. Their own loss did not reach 300 men (September 19, 1356). *

Edward returned in triumph to Bordeaux, and afterwards crossed to England, to present his all-important prisoner to the king his father. The prince treated John with great gentleness and courtesy, and did all that he could to avoid wounding his feelings. Nevertheless, he saw that in the pressure that could be brought to bear upon his captive, lay the best hope of winning an honourable and profitable peace from the French. John chafed bitterly at his detention in custody, and got little consolation from finding himself in the company of his ally David, King of Scotland, who had been a prisoner in England for ten years, ever since the battle of Neville's Cross.

The difficulty in negotiating a peace did not come from King John, but from the regency which replaced him at Paris. The French did not see why they should sign a humiliating treaty merely in order to deliver a harsh and not very popular king from confinement. But a series of disasters at last forced them to submit. The three years 1357-60 were almost the most miserable that France ever knew. The young Dauphin Charles, a mere lad, proved quite unable to keep order in the land; the barons did what they pleased; hordes of disbanded mercenary soldiers, whom the government could not pay, roamed plundering over the country side. The people of Paris broke out into sedition, under a bold citizen named Etienne Marcel, and put the Dauphin himself in durance for a time. Last and worst of all, the peasantry of Central France, driven to despair by the general misery of the times, rose in rebellion against all constituted authority, slew every man of gentle blood that they could lay hands on, and roamed about in huge bands, burning castles and manors, and plundering towns and villages. The horrors of the Jacquerie,* as this anarchic revolt was called, bid fair to destroy all government in France, and it was only by a desperate rally that those who had anything to lose succeeded in banding themselves together and crushing the insurgents.

When France had suffered so bitterly from its foes within,

* So called from Jacques Bonhomme, the nickname of the typical French peasant.

Edward of England took a great army across the Channel, and in 1359-60 wasted the whole land as far as Paris and Rheims. But as the French refused to meet him in the field, he won no battles, took few towns, and got little profit from his destructive raid. It was at this juncture that he and the Dauphin at last came to terms. To end the war the French were ready to grant whatever conditions Edward chose to exact. He asked for a ransom of 3,000,000 gold crowns for the person of King John, and for the whole of the duchy of Aquitaine, as Duchess Eleanor had held it in 1154. In return, he would give up his claim on the crown of France, and be content to be independent Duke of Aquitaine only. So all the lands in Southern France which John and Henry III. had lost—Poitou, Saintonge, Perigord, Limoges, Quercy, and the rest,—were restored to the Plantagenets, after being 150 years in French hands. Calais



and Ponthieu in the north were also formally ceded to King Edward by this celebrated treaty of Bretigny (May, 1360).

It appeared for a moment as if a permanent peace between

England and France had been established. King Edward, in return for giving up a claim on the whole of France, which no one had taken very seriously, had won the long-lost lands which his ancestors had never hoped to retake. He had also made an advantageous peace with Scotland, releasing King David for a ransom of 90,000 marks, and the fortresses of Berwick and Roxburgh.

Edward's fortune was now at its highest, and his reign promised to have a prosperous and peaceful end. He had reached the age of fifty, and was surrounded by a band of sons who should have been the strength of his old age. Edward the Black Prince he made Duke of Aquitaine; Lionel of Clarence, his second son, was married to the heiress of the great Irish family of de Burgh; John of Gaunt, the third son, was wedded to the heiress of Lancaster; Thomas of Woodstock, his fifth son, to one of the coheiresses of the earldom of Hereford. Thus he trusted to identify by intermarriage the interests of the royal house and the greater baronage, not seeing that there was as much probability of his younger sons becoming leaders of baronial factions as of the barons forgetting their old jealousy of the royal house. Meanwhile, however, things went fairly well for some years after the peace of Bretigny. In spite of the vast expenditure of money on the war, and in spite of the ravages of the Black Death, the country was in many ways prosperous. England had enjoyed internal quiet for thirty years; her commerce with Flanders and Gascony was developing; her fleet, in spite of much piracy, was dominant in all the Western seas. The increase of wealth is shown by the fact that Edward III. first of all English monarchs issued a large currency of gold money (1349), and that his "nobles," as the broad thin pieces were called, became the favourite medium of exchange in all North-Western Europe, and formed the model for the gold coins of the Netherlands, part of Germany, and Scotland. Manufactures as well as foreign trade were beginning to grow important; the reign of Edward is always remembered for the development of the weaving industry in Eastern England. He induced many Flemish weavers to settle in Norwich and elsewhere, moved, it is said, by the advice of his Netherlandish queen, Philippa of Hainault. But the main exports of England were still raw

Development
of trade.—The
Flemish
weavers.

material—especially wool and metals—and not manufactured goods. The English trader did not usually sail beyond Norway on the one hand, and North Spain on the other; intercourse with more distant countries was carried on mainly by companies of foreign merchants, of whom the men of the Hanse Towns were the most important. These Germans had a factory in London called the Steelyard, where they dwelt in a body, under strict rules and regulations. It was by them that English goods were taken to the more distant markets on the Baltic or the Mediterranean.

The reasons why the treaty of Bretigny failed to give a permanent settlement of the quarrel between England and France were many. The English pleaded that Desultory fighting in Brittany. Spanish war. the French never fulfilled their obligations, for King John found his people very unwilling to raise his huge ransom, and never paid half of it. He returned to England in 1364 to surrender himself in default of payment—for he had a keen sense of honour in such things—and then died. His son, Charles V., at once refused—as was natural—to pay the arrears. But a more fruitful source of quarrelling was the civil war in Brittany, which still lingered on after twenty years of fighting; English and French succours came to help the two rival dukes, and fought each other on Breton soil, though peace reigned elsewhere. The same thing was soon after seen in Spain: Pedro the Cruel, the wicked King of Castile, was attacked by his bastard brother, Henry of Trastamara, who enlisted a great host of French mercenaries, under Bertrand du Guesclin, the best professional soldier in France. Driven out of Castile by the usurper and his allies, Pedro fled to Bordeaux, where the Black Prince was reigning as Duke of Aquitaine. He enlisted the help of the English, who were jealous of French influence in Spain, and bought the aid of Edward's younger brothers, John of Gaunt, who was now a widower, and Edmund of Cambridge, by marrying his two daughters to them. Edward raised a great army of English and Gascons, and crossed the Pyrenees to restore King Pedro. At Najara * he routed the French and Castilians, took Bertrand du Guesclin prisoner, and drove Henry of Trastamara out of the land (1367). But the ungrateful Pedro then refused to repay the large sums which Edward had spent in

* Sometimes also called Navarrete; it lies beyond the Ebro, near Logroño,

raising his army, and the prince withdrew in wrath to Aquitaine. He took back with him an intermittent fever which he had caught in Spain, and never recovered his health. Left to his own resources, Pedro was soon beset for a second time by his brother and the French; he was captured by treachery, and slain by Henry of Trastamara's own hand.

Edward had raised vast sums of money from Aquitaine for his Spanish expedition by heavy taxation which sorely vexed his new subjects. For the Poitevins and other French, who had become the unwilling vassals of an English lord by the treaty of Bretigny, were entirely without any sympathy for Edward and his plans. When the prince returned, broken in health and penniless, from Spain, they plotted rebellion against him, with the secret approval of the young King of France. It soon appeared that Edward III. had been unwise in annexing so many districts of purely French feeling and blood to the Gascon duchy. For in 1369-70 Poitou, Limoges, and all the northern half of Aquitaine broke out into rebellion, and Charles V. openly sent out his armies to aid them. The Black Prince took the field in a litter, for he was too weak to ride, and stormed Limoges, where he ordered a horrid massacre of the rebellious citizens, a deed that deeply stained his hitherto untarnished fame. But his strength could carry him no further; he returned helpless to Bordeaux, and presently resigned the duchy of Aquitaine and returned to England, there to languish for some years, and die at last of his lingering disorder.

Rebellion in
Aquitaine.—
Massacre at
Limoges.

The king himself, though not yet sixty years of age, had fallen into a premature decay both of mind and body, so that his son's early decease was doubly unfortunate. After losing his excellent wife Queen Philippa in 1369, he had sunk into a deep depression, from which he only recovered to fall into the hands of unscrupulous favourites. In private he was governed by his chamberlain, Lord Latimer, and by a lady named Alice Perrers, who had become his mistress; both abused their influence to plunder his coffers and make market of his favour. The higher governance of the realm was mainly in the hands of John of Gaunt, the king's eldest surviving son, a selfish and headstrong prince, who made himself the head of the war-party, and hoped to gather laurels that might vie with those of his elder brother, the Black Prince.

Premature
decay of the
king.

The last seven years of Edward's reign (1370-77) were full of disasters abroad and discontent at home. In France the successors of the Black Prince proved utterly unable to maintain their grasp on Aquitaine. Town by town and castle by castle, all the districts that had been won by the treaty of Bretigny passed into the hands of King Charles V. His skilful general Bertrand du Guesclin won his way to success without risking a single pitched battle with the invincible English archery. When John of Gaunt took a great host over to Calais in 1373, the French retired before him by their king's order, and shut themselves up behind stone walls, after sweeping the country bare of provisions. The Duke of Lancaster marched up to the gates of Paris, and then all through Central France down to Bordeaux; but, though he did much damage to the open country, he could not halt to besiege any great town for want of food, and finally reached Guienne with an army half-starved and woefully reduced in numbers. Before King Edward was in his grave his dominions in France had shrunk to a district far smaller than he had held before the "Hundred Years' War" had commenced. Nothing was left save the ports of Bordeaux and Bayonne, with the strip of Gascon coast between them; in the north, however, the all-important fortress of Calais was firmly and successfully maintained.

Meanwhile there was bitter strife in Parliament at home, for ill success without always brings on discontent within. John of Gaunt, since he was known to sway his father's councils, was forced to bear the brunt of the popular displeasure. It was he who was considered responsible for the misconduct of the French war, the peculations of the king's favourites, and the demands of the crown for increased taxation. The party opposed to him in Parliament counted as its head the good bishop William of Wykeham, who had been Chancellor from 1367 to 1371, and had been driven from office by Lancaster's command. He was supported by the clergy, and by most of the "knights of the shires," who formed the more important half of the House of Commons. It was probably the fact that the clergy were unanimously set against him that led John of Gaunt to seek allies for himself by giving countenance to an attack on the Church, which was just then

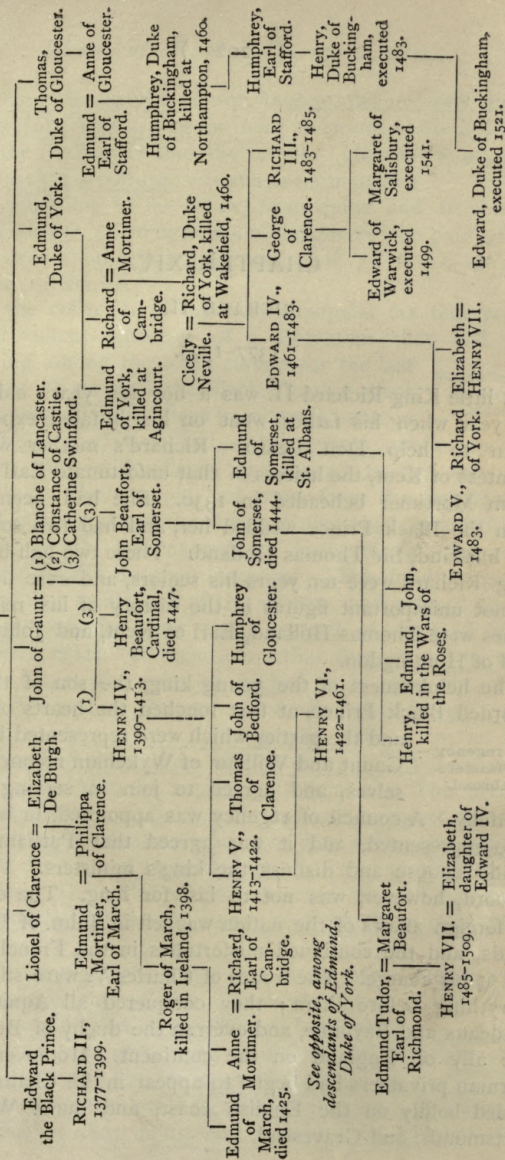
beginning to develop. This was the anti-papal movement of the Lollards, or Wicliffites, as they were called after their leader John Wicliffe—the “Morning Star of the Reformation.” The state of the Papacy and of the Church at large was at this moment very scandalous. The Pope was living no more at Rome, but at Avignon, under the shadow of the French king, and the power of the Papacy was being shamelessly misused for French objects. England had never loved the papal influence, and had still less reason to love it when it was employed for the benefit of her political enemies. The tale of the simony, corruption, and evil living of the papal court had gone forth all over Europe, and provoked even more wrath in England than elsewhere. The English Church itself was far from blameless: there were bishops who were mere statesmen and warriors, and neglected their diocesan work; there were secular clergy who never saw their parishes, and monasteries where religion and sound learning were less regarded than wealth and high living. It was especially the great wealth of the monasteries, and the small profit that it brought the nation, which provoked popular comment. Since the days of the Statute of Mortmain the spirit of the times was changed, and benefactors who desired to leave a good work behind them founded and endowed schools and colleges, and not abbeys as of old. It was John Wicliffe, an Oxford Doctor of Divinity, and sometime master of Balliol College, who gave voice to the popular discontent with the state of the Papacy and the national Church. He taught that the Pope’s claim to be God’s vicegerent on earth and to guide the consciences of all men was a blasphemous usurpation, because each individual was responsible to Heaven for his own acts and thoughts. “All men,” he said in feudal phraseology, “are tenants-in-chief under God, and hold from him all that they are and possess: the Pope claims to be our mesne-lord, and to interfere between us and our divine suzerain, and therein he grievously errs.” Wicliffe also held that the Church was far too rich; he thought that her virtue was oppressed by the load of wealth, and advocated a return to apostolic poverty, in which the clergy should surrender the greater part of their enormous endowments. At a later date he developed doubts on the Real Presence and other leading doctrines of the mediaeval Church, but it was mainly as a

denouncer of the power of the Papacy and the riches and luxury of the clergy that he became known.

John of Gaunt's object in favouring Wicliffe was purely political; with the reformer's religious views he can have had little sympathy. But he wished to turn the seething discontent of England into the channel of an attack on the Church, and to keep it from his own doors. For the last twenty years legislation against ecclesiastical grievances had been not infrequent. In 1351 the *Statute of Provisors* had prohibited the Pope from giving away English benefices to his favourites. In 1353 the *First Statute of Praemunire* had forbidden English litigants to transfer their disputes to the Church courts abroad. Duke John's attempt to distract the attention of the nation to the reform of matters ecclesiastic was partly successful; we find many proposals in Parliament to strip the Church of part of her overgrown endowments, and utilize them for the service of the state. On this point clerk and layman had many a bitter wrangle. But Lancaster could not altogether keep the storm from beating on himself and his father; in 1376 the "Good Parliament" impeached Latimer and Neville, Edward's favourites and ministers, and removed and fined them. Alice Perrers, the old king's mistress, was at the same time banished. In the following year Lancaster reasserted himself, packed a Parliament with his supporters, and cancelled the condemnation of Latimer, Neville, and Alice Perrers. The Bishop of London in revenge arrested Lancaster's *protégé* Wicliffe, and began to try him for heresy; but the duke appeared in the court, and so threatened and browbeat the bishop that he was fain to release his prisoner.

But new complications were now at hand; the aspect of affairs was suddenly changed by the death of the old king on January 2, 1377, and political affairs took a new complexion on the accession of his young grandson, Richard II., the only surviving child of the Black Prince.

EDWARD III. = Philippa of Hainault.



CHAPTER XIV.

RICHARD II.

1377-1399.

THE little King Richard II. was a boy ten years old, born in the year when his father went on his ill-fated expedition to Spain to help Don Pedro. Richard's mother was Joan, Countess of Kent, the heiress of that unfortunate Earl Edmund, whom Mortimer beheaded in 1330. She had been a widow when the Black Prince wedded her, and had two sons by her first husband, Sir Thomas Holland. These two half-brothers of King Richard were ten years his seniors, and were destined to be not unimportant figures in the history of his reign; their names were Thomas Holland, Earl of Kent, and John Holland, Earl of Huntingdon.

The helplessness of the young king, the son of the deeply mourned Black Prince, at first touched the hearts of all men, and the parties which were represented by John of Gaunt and William of Wykeham reconciled themselves, and agreed to join in serving the king faithfully.

The regency.—
Disasters
abroad.

A council of regency was appointed, in which both were represented, and it was agreed that Parliament alone should choose and dismiss the king's ministers. This happy concord, however, was not to last for long. The conduct of the foreign affairs of the nation was left in John of Lancaster's hands, and the continued misfortunes in the French war were laid to his charge. The troops of Charles V. were still carrying everything before them; they conquered all Aquitaine save Bordeaux and Bayonne, and overran the duchy of Brittany, the sole ally of England on the continent. Moreover, fleets of Norman privateers had begun to appear in the Channel. They landed boldly on the English coast, and burnt Winchelsea, Portsmouth, and Gravesend.

To restore the fortune of war, money was urgently needed, and Duke John kept asking for more and more, to the discontent both of the Parliament and the nation. He was granted in 1379 a poll-tax, wherein every man was assessed according to his estate, from dukes and archbishops who paid £6 13s. 4d. to agricultural labourers who paid 4d. In 1380 followed another tax graduated from £1 to 1s. on every grown man or woman.

Heavy taxation.

It was the collection of this very unpopular tax that precipitated the violent outbreak of a discontent that had been smouldering among the lower classes for the last thirty years. Ever since the Black Death a silent but bitter contention had been in progress between the landholding classes and their tenants, more especially those who were still villeins, and bound to the soil. The main stress of the struggle had come from the fact that the dearth of labourers, and the rise in wages which resulted from the Black Death, had caused the lords of the manors to press more hardly on their tenants. They tried to get all the labour they could out of the villeins, and refused to take money payments for their farms instead of days of labour on the lord's fields. It seems, too, that they strove to claim as villeins many who were, or wished to be, free rent-paying copyhold or leasehold tenants. Moreover, when forced to hire free labour, they tried to under-pay it, relying on the scale of wages fixed by the Statute of Labourers in 1350, instead of abiding by the laws of supply and demand. The pressure on the part of the lords led to combinations in secret clubs and societies among the tenants, who agreed to refuse the statutory wages, and determined to agitate for the removal of all the old labour-rents. Their idea was to commute all such service due on their little holdings into money-rents, at the rate of 4d. for every acre.

Discontent of labouring classes.

But the rising of 1380 was due to many other causes beside the grievance of the villeins. Much discontent can be traced to the mismanagement of the French war, which was all laid on John of Gaunt's shoulders. Much more was due to the filtering down of the teaching of the Lollards to the lower strata of the nation. Wicliffe had always preached that unjust and sinful rulers, whether clerks

Communist doctrines of the Lollards.

or laymen, were cut off from the right to use their authority by their own manifest unworthiness, and had no just dominion over their fellow-men. He had especially protested against the wealth and pomp of the clergy, and urged that they ought to return to apostolic poverty. The wilder and more headstrong of his followers had pressed his teaching to the advocacy of pure communism, saying that riches were in themselves evil, and that all men should be equal in all things. John Ball, the best known of these fanatical preachers, was wont to perambulate the country delivering sermons on his favourite text—

“ When Adam dived and Eve span,
Who was then the gentleman? ”

Wherever men were oppressed and discontented, they listened eagerly to these discourses, and began to talk of putting an end to all difference between man and man, and dividing all things equally between them. But it was only the wilder spirits who were imbued with these doctrines; the majority—like most discontented Englishmen in all ages—were only set on the practical task of endeavouring to redress their own particular grievances and to better their condition.

It was in June, 1381, that the rising broke out simultaneously in almost the whole of Eastern England, from Yorkshire to Hants. It has gained its name of “Wat Tyler’s rebellion” from Walter the Tyler of Maidstone, who was chief of the insurgents of Kent. Curiously enough, four other men bearing or assuming the name of “the Tyler” were prominent in the troubles. The main incidents of the rising took place round London, towards which the insurgents flocked from all quarters. Simultaneously the men of Essex, under a chief who called himself Jack Straw, marched to Hampstead, those of Hertfordshire to Highbury, and those of Kent to Blackheath. On their way they had done much damage; the Essex rioters had caught and murdered the Chief Justice of England, and the Kentishmen had slain several knights and lawyers who fell into their hands. Everywhere they pillaged the houses of the gentry, and sought out and burnt the manor-rolls which preserved the records of the duties and obligations of the villeins to the lord of the manor.

The king’s council at London was quite helpless, for the

sudden rising had taken them by surprise, and they had no troops ready. Seeing the city surrounded by the rioters, ^{**Demands of the rioters.**} they shut its gates and sent to ask what were the grievances and demands of the mob. The claims that were formulated by the leaders of the rising were more moderate than might have been expected, for the wilder spirits were still kept in order by the cooler ones. They asked that villeinage should be abolished, and all lands held on villein-tenure be made into leasehold farms rated at 4d. an acre, that the tolls and market dues which heightened the price of provisions should be abolished, and that all who had been engaged in the rising should receive a full pardon for the murders and pillage that had taken place.

These demands were not too violent to be taken into consideration. While the regency hesitated, the young king, who displayed a spirit and resource most unusual in a ^{**Attitude of the king.—Progress of the riot.**} boy of fourteen, announced that he would himself go to meet the rioters and try to quiet them, for as yet they had not said or done anything implying disrespect for the royal name. But meanwhile the Kentish insurgents had crossed the Thames and burnt John of Gaunt's great palace, the Savoy, which lay in the Strand outside the walls of London. Presently the mob in the city rose and opened the gates, so that Wat Tyler and his host were able to enter. They slew some foreign merchants and some lawyers, the two classes whom they seem most to have hated, but wrought no general pillage or massacre.

On the 13th of June, Richard, persisting in his resolve of bringing the insurgents to reason, rode out of Aldgate, and met the Essex men at Mile End. After hearing their petitions, he declared that they contained nothing impossible, and that he would undertake that they should be granted. But while the king was parleying with the eastern insurgents, the Kentishmen burst into the Tower, where the regency had been sitting, and committed a hideous outrage. They caught Simon of Sudbury, the Archbishop of Canterbury—he was also Chancellor—Sir Robert Hales, the High Treasurer, and Legge, who had farmed the obnoxious poll-tax, dragged them forth to Tower Hill, and there slew them.

Notwithstanding these murders, the young king persisted in his

design of treating with the insurgents. He bade Tyler and his host meet him next day in Smithfield, outside the city gates. They came, but Tyler, who had throughout shown himself the most violent of the insurgents, began wrangling with the king's suite instead of keeping to the business in hand. This so enraged William Walworth, the Mayor of London, that he drew a short sword and hewed the rebel down from his horse. Then one of the king's squires leapt down and stabbed him as he lay. Walworth's act was likely to have cost the king and his whole party their lives, for the insurgents bent their bows and shouted that they would avenge their captain there and then. But Richard, with extraordinary presence of mind in one so young, pushed his horse forward and bade them stand still, for they should have their demands granted, and he himself would be their captain since Tyler was dead. So there in Smithfield he had a charter drawn up, conceding all that the insurgents asked, and pardoning them for their treason. Satisfied with this, the Kentishmen dispersed to their homes.

Richard returned to London in triumph, as he well deserved, vowing that he had that day won back the realm of England, which had been as good as lost. Soon the nobles and their armed retainers began to gather to London, and when they found themselves in force, they began to discuss the legality of the king's concessions to the peasants. He had not, it was urged, the right to give away other men's property—namely, their feudal rights over their vassals—without the consent of Parliament. It was shocking, too, that the murderers of the archbishop, the lord chief justice, and the treasurer, should go unpunished. So Richard's charter was annulled and his general pardon cancelled; all the leaders of the revolt were caught one after another and hanged; even John Ball's priest's robe did not save him from the gallows, though clergymen were so seldom executed in the Middle Ages.

When Parliament met, the king proposed to them that his promise to the insurgents should stand firm so far as the abolition of villeinage was concerned, since this had been the main cause of the rising. But the barons and knights of the shire were loth to give up their feudal rights, and

The king meets
the rioters.—
Tyler slain.

Punishment of
the leaders.—
Richard's con-
cessions
annulled.

Decay of
villeinage.

refused to confirm the king's grant; they replied that the trouble had really had its origin in the evil governance of the ministers, and turned them all out of office. Nevertheless, the rising had not failed in its object, for in future the lords of the manors were afraid to enforce the full letter of their claims over the peasants, and villeinage gradually sank into desuetude.

King Richard had shown his high spirit in the days of the rising, and four years later, when he had attained the age of eighteen, he endeavoured to take the reins of power into his own hands. His uncle of Lancaster did not gainsay him, for he felt himself to be unpopular with the nation, so he departed over-sea on a vain errand. In right of his wife Constance, the daughter of Pedro the Cruel, he had a claim to the crown of Castile, and trusted to get aid from the Portuguese, to set him on the throne which Henry of Trastamara had usurped. So he gathered his retainers and many hired soldiers, and sailed away to Spain; nor was his face seen in England for more than four years.

Richard
assumes the
government.

Meanwhile the young king had placed his friends in office, and strove to rule for himself. His chief minister was Michael de la Pole, son of a rich merchant at Hull, whom he made Earl of Suffolk, to the disgust of many of the barons. He also favoured greatly Robert de Vere, whom he made Lord-Deputy of Ireland, and created Marquis of Dublin. In them and in his two half-brothers, Thomas and John Holland, he placed his confidence.

His ministers.

Richard was now twenty; he had been married some years back to Anne of Bohemia, the daughter of the Emperor Charles IV., and might have expected that all the world would have counted him old enough to administer the kingdom.

But he had reckoned without one man's ambition and jealousy. His youngest uncle, Thomas, Duke of Gloucester, was an unscrupulous and domineering prince, who had hoped to succeed to John of Gaunt's position, and to have the chief part in ruling his nephew's realm.

Schemes of
Thomas, Duke
of Gloucester.

Richard knew him well, and had no intention of employing him. Seeing this, Duke Thomas began to gather a party among the greater nobles, persuading them that the king was putting the rule of England into the hands of mere upstarts and favourites, and that de la Pole and de Vere were no better than Gaveston

or the Despensers. Gloucester drew into his designs many of the most important barons ; the Earls of Warwick, Arundel, and Nottingham, and Henry of Bolingbroke, the son and heir of John of Gaunt, were the chief plotters. They stirred up the people and Parliament by complaints of the maladministration of the ministers, and used a threatened invasion of the French as a lever against those entrusted with the conduct of the long unhappy war with France. When they had excited public opinion, they had Suffolk impeached in Parliament for maladministration of the revenue. Though almost certainly guiltless, he was condemned and imprisoned. But when Parliament had dispersed, the king took him out of confinement, and restored him to favour, declaring that he had a full right to choose his own ministers.

There followed, shortly after, the armed rising of Thomas of Gloucester and his accomplices. Proclaiming that they wished

The "Lords
Appellant."

only to free the king from evil councillors, Gloucester, Warwick, Arundel, Nottingham, and the young Henry of Bolingbroke marched on London with a great body of retainers. They called themselves the "Lords Appellant," because they *appealed* or accused of treason the king's ministers. Richard was taken by surprise at this very unjustifiable raising of civil war. He bade his friends arm, but de Vere, who had raised some levies in Oxfordshire, was beaten by the rebels at Radcot Bridge, and no one else tried to resist. De Vere and de la Pole succeeded in flying to France, where they both died shortly after in exile. But the king and the rest of his friends and ministers fell into the hands of the Lords Appellant.

Under the eyes of Gloucester and his accomplices the Merciless Parliament was summoned to London. Awed by the

The Merciless
Parliament.

armed men around them, the members declared Suffolk and de Vere outlaws, and condemned to death seven of the king's minor ministers. So Tresilian the Chief Justice, Sir Simon Burley who had been the king's tutor, and five more were hanged (February, 1388). This disgraceful Parliament ended by voting £20,000 as a gift to the Lords Appellant for their services, and then dispersed.

Gloucester and his friends were in office for something more than a year, a period long enough to show the world that they

were grasping self-seekers, and not patriots. The only service they did the country was to negotiate truces with Scotland and France, which stopped for a time the lingering "Hundred Years' War."

By 1389 Richard had passed his majority. In a session of the royal council, he suddenly asked his uncle Gloucester how old he was. The duke replied that he was now in his twenty-second year. "Then," said the king, "I am certainly old enough to manage my own affairs." So, formally thanking Gloucester and the rest for their past services, he dismissed them from office. If he had replaced them by his own favourites the civil war would have broken out again, but Richard wisely called in the good bishop William of Wykeham, and other ancient councillors of his grandfather's, against whom no one had a word to say. He made no attempt to punish the Lords Appellant, and acted with such self-restraint and moderation that all the realm was soon full of his praises. Yet all the time he was dissembling, and biding his time for revenge on the men who had murdered his friends in 1388.

Dismissal of
Gloucester.

Richard's wise and moderate rule lasted for eight years, 1389-97. They were a prosperous time: the French war was suspended, and the king seemed to have put a permanent end to it, by marrying a French princess, Isabella, the daughter of Charles VI., after his first wife Anne of Bohemia had died. Perhaps the most important feature of the time was the growth of the Wicliffite movement. John Wicliffe himself had died, at a good old age, in 1384, but his disciples the Lollards continued to increase and multiply. We find them so powerful that in the Parliament of 1394 their representatives in the Commons had begun to agitate for a national declaration against some of the most prominent doctrines of the Roman Church—such as image-worship, the efficacy of pilgrimages, the celibacy of the clergy, and even the Real Presence in the Lord's Supper. They were only stopped by Richard himself, who hurried home from Ireland to rebuke them. He told them that he would hear nothing of such changes, but he did not molest or persecute them, and let the movement take its course. The "Great Schism" was at this time at its height, and the Church presented the disgraceful spectacle of two rival popes, at Rome and

Moderation of
Richard.—
Growth of
Lollardy.

Avignon, anathematizing each other, and preaching a crusade against each other's adherents. When such was the state of affairs, and no one knew who was orthodox and who heretical, it was natural enough that the new doctrines should flourish.

In 1397 Richard thought himself so firmly seated on his throne that he could venture to execute his long-cherished vengeance on the Lords Appellant. He had won revenge on the Lords Appellant over two of them to himself, Mowbray, Earl of Nottingham, and Henry of Bolingbroke, the heir of the old Duke of Lancaster. On the others his vengeance suddenly fell; he accused Gloucester, Arundel, and Warwick, of plotting a new rebellion. They were seized and thrown into prison: Arundel was tried and executed; Gloucester was secretly murdered at Calais; Warwick was banished for life to the Isle of Man. Nor was this all: for a time Richard professed the greatest affection for Nottingham and Bolingbroke, the two survivors of the plotters of 1388. He even made them Dukes of Norfolk and Hereford. But in 1398 his vengeance fell on them also. He induced Hereford to accuse Norfolk of treasonable conversation, and when Mowbray denied it, proposed that they should meet in judicial combat in the lists at Coventry. They consented, but when the champions came ready armed before him, Richard suddenly stopped the duel, and announced to the astonished dukes that he had determined to banish them both from the realm—Norfolk for life, Hereford for ten years.

Having thus wreaked his vengeance on the last of the Lords Appellant, Richard proceeded to rule in a far more arbitrary manner than before, and decidedly outstepped his Tyranny of Richard constitutional rights. He thought that there was no one left in the realm who would dare to oppose him, and that he could do all that he chose. His most flagrantly illegal step was to increase his revenue by raising forced loans from men of wealth, an ingenious means of getting money without having to apply to Parliament for it. But he kept up a considerable standing army of archers, to overawe discontent, and thought himself quite secure. When John of Gaunt died in 1399, he seized upon all the great estates of the duchy of Lancaster, and refused to allow the exiled Henry of Bolingbroke to claim his father's title and heritage. This roused much sympathy for Henry, since he had been promised that

his banishment should make no difference to his rights of inheritance

Richard's nearest kinsman and heir at this time was his cousin Roger, Earl of March, the grandson of Lionel of Clarence, the Black Prince's next brother. The king had sent him over to Ireland and entrusted him with the government of that country, for he paid more attention to Irish affairs than any of his ancestors, and had already made one expedition across St. George's Channel in 1394. Ireland had been in a state of complete anarchy ever since Edward Bruce broke up the foundations of English rule eighty years before, and both the Anglo-Norman lords of the Pale and the Irish chiefs of the west showed an utter disregard for the royal authority. Roger of March was killed by rebels in a skirmish at Kenlys-in-Ossory in 1398, and this so provoked Richard that he resolved to go over himself, with all his personal retainers and hired guards, and put an end to the anarchy.

Condition of
Ireland.—
Richard's Irish
expedition.

Accordingly, early in 1399 the king sailed for Dublin, leaving England in charge of his one surviving uncle, Edmund, Duke of York, a weak old man who had always shown himself very loyal, but very incapable. When Richard was lost to sight in the Irish bogs, all his enemies began to take counsel against him. The barons began to murmur at his arbitrary rule, the citizens of London at his forced loans, the clergy at his tolerance for the Lollards. At the critical moment Henry of Bolingbroke landed unexpectedly at Ravenspur, in Yorkshire, proclaiming that he had only come to claim his father's duchy, which had been so wrongfully withheld from him. He was immediately joined by Percy, Earl of Northumberland, and many other northern lords. The regent Edmund of York gathered an army to withstand him, but when Bolingbroke explained to him that he came with no treasonable purpose, but only to plead for his forfeited estates, the simple old man dismissed his troops and went home. Thus unexpectedly freed from opposition, Bolingbroke soon showed his real mind by catching and hanging Richard's ministers, Scrope, Earl of Wiltshire, Bushey, and Greene.

Return of
Bolingbroke.

The news of Duke Henry's landing had soon got to Ireland, and the king at once prepared to return and resist him. But

for four weeks persistent easterly winds kept him storm-bound at Dublin. At last the wind turned, and Richard **Richard returns from Ireland—is overpowered.** could cross, but he came too late. York's army had dispersed, and some Welsh levies, whom the Earl of Salisbury had raised, had also gone home, after waiting in vain for the king's landing. When Richard reached Flint Castle with the small following that he had brought with him, he was surrounded by troops under the Earl of Northumberland, who had been awaiting his arrival. Nothing but surrender was possible, so Richard yielded himself up, trusting that his cousin aimed merely at seizing the governance of the realm, and not at his master's life or crown.

Henry, however, had other views: he put Richard in strict custody, and took him to London. There the Parliament **Richard abdicates.—Election of Henry.** assembled, overawed by the armed retainers of the duke and his partisans. Richard was forced by threats to abdicate, and thought that he had thus secured his life. Then Henry caused the Parliament to accept his cousin's resignation, and claimed the crown for himself. This was in manifest disregard of the rights of Edmund of March, the young son of that Roger who had fallen in Ireland a year before. The Parliament, however, formally elected the duke to fill his cousin's throne, and saluted him as king by the name of Henry IV. Constitutionally, no doubt, they were acting within their rights; but it is only fair to say that Richard—headstrong and arbitrary though he had been—had scarcely deserved his fate. Nor was there any adequate reason for setting aside the clear hereditary claim of Edmund of March (1399).

Henry had grasped the crown, but he knew that his position was insecure. He had only a Parliamentary title, and what one **Murder of Richard.** Parliament had done another could undo. The late king had many faithful partisans, and was not disliked by the nation at large. Therefore the unscrupulous usurper determined to make away with him. Richard was sent to Pontefract Castle, and never seen again; undoubtedly he was murdered, but no one save Henry and his confidants knew how the deed was done. The details of the dark act have never come to light.

CHAPTER XV.

HENRY IV.

1399-1413.

HENRY of Bolingbroke had small comfort all his days on the throne which he had usurped. He was only the king of a faction, the nominee of the party which had once supported the Lords Appellant ; if one half of the baronage was friendly to him for that reason, the other half was always estranged from him. It might almost be said that the " Wars of the Roses," the strife of the two great factions who adhered the one to the house of Lancaster and the other to the house of March, began on Henry's accession.

Richard's deposition had been the work, not of the whole nation, but of Henry's friends, the Percies of Northumberland, the Nevilles of Westmoreland, the Arundels—son and brother to the Arundel whom Richard had beheaded in 1397—and the Staffords* who represented the line of Thomas, Duke of Gloucester. The Parliament had acquiesced in Henry's usurpation rather because it had been discontented with Richard's arbitrary rule, than because it had any very great liking for his cousin. Perhaps the more far-sighted of its members had concluded that the accession of a king whose only title rested on election would be favourable to the development of constitutional liberties, since Henry would—at least for a time—be very much dependent on the good-will of the body which had chosen him, and which might some day choose another ruler if he proved unpliant.

Before Henry had been two months on the throne, civil war had broken out. The insurgents were Richard's kinsmen and

* Thomas of Gloucester's only daughter had married Edmund, Earl of Stafford.

favourites. The two Hollands—Earls of Kent and Huntingdon, who were Richard's half-brothers—conspired with Montacute, Earl of Salisbury, and Lord Despenser, who had been his trusted friends. They plotted to seize King Henry, as he lay at Windsor keeping the festivities of Christmas, to slay or imprison him, and to release their old master from Pontefract Castle. Unfortunately for themselves, they took into their counsels Edmund Earl of Rutland, the son of the old Duke of York. The cowardly prince, finding that he was suspected, informed the king of the plot before the conspirators were ready. Henry escaped from Windsor, and called his friends together at London. The rebel earls set out in various directions to endeavour to raise their retainers, but they were all overtaken. Kent and Salisbury fell into their enemies' hands at Cirencester, Huntingdon was caught in Essex, Despenser at Bristol. All were beheaded without any delay or form of trial. Henry's grim reply to this insurrection was the production of the dead body of King Richard, which was brought from Pontefract to London, and publicly displayed to prove his death. Nevertheless, many men refused to credit his decease, and for years after there were some who maintained that the body exposed in St. Paul's was not that of the late king, but that of his chaplain, who bore an extraordinary personal resemblance to him. They believed, or tried to believe, that Richard had escaped and was alive in Scotland. Trading on this notion, an impostor presented himself at the Scotch court, and was long entertained there as the true King of England by the simple Robert III.

Hardly was the rebellion of the Hollands put down before a second civil war arose. The Welsh had always been devoted to King Richard, and had taken his deposition very ill. In 1400, a gentleman named Owen-ap-Griffith, of Glendower, who had been one of Richard's squires, put himself at the head of a rising in North Wales. Owen was of the old princely blood of the house of Llewellyn, and proclaimed himself Prince of North Wales under the suzerainty of his master Richard, whom he declared to be still alive in Scotland. He was a guerilla captain of marked ability, and completely baffled the efforts that King Henry made to put him down. He swept all over North Wales,

**Rebellion in
Wales.—Owen
Glendower.**

captured many of its castles, and extended his sway over the whole countryside. To the day of his death Owen maintained himself in independence, ravaging the English border when he was left alone, and retiring into the recesses of Snowdon when a great force took the field against him. His incursions penetrated as far as Worcester and Shrewsbury, and no man west of the Severn was safe from his plundering bands.

As if the Welsh trouble was not enough to keep King Henry employed, other wars broke out around him. The Scots under the Earl of Douglas crossed the border to harry Northumberland, and Lewis of Orleans, the uncle of Richard's queen Isabella, began to stir up the French court to attack England, and encouraged many descents of Norman privateers on the coasts of the Channel.

England
harassed by
Scotland and
France.

Henry's only resource was to keep the nation in good temper by a rigorous and punctual obedience to all the petitions and requests of his Parliament. Accordingly, he showed himself the most constitutional of sovereigns, and both now and for many years to come made himself the dutiful servant of the Commons. He also did his best to enlist the favour of Churchmen on his side by a cruel persecution of the Lollards. The disciples of Wicliffe had always favoured King Richard, who had shown them complete tolerance, and Henry felt that he was not estranging any of his own partisans when he handed over the Lollards to the mercy of the harsh and fanatical Archbishop Arundel.* It was under this prelate's guidance that the king assented to the infamous statute *De Heretico Comburendo* (1401), which condemned all convicted schismatics to the stake and fire. The first victim burnt was William Sawtree, a London clergyman, and others followed him at intervals all through Henry's reign.

Henry and the
Parliament.—
Persecution of
the Lollards.

The Scotch war came to a head in 1402, at the battle of Homildon Hill. There Murdoch of Albany, the son of the Scotch regent, was completely defeated by Percy of Northumberland and his son Harry Percy, whom the Borderers nicknamed Hotspur for his speed and energy. But the victory of Homildon was fated to do England more harm than any defeat, since it was to cause a renewal of the civil war. The Percies had taken many prisoners, including

Battle of
Homildon Hill.

* Brother of the Arundel whom Richard II. beheaded.

Murdoch himself, and three other Scots Earls, Douglas, Moray, and Orkney. From the ransoms of these peers they trusted to get great profit ; but King Henry, who was at his wits' end to scrape money together without troubling Parliament, took the prisoners out of the Percies' hands and claimed the ransoms for himself. This mortally offended Northumberland, a proud and greedy chief, who had been Henry's main support at the time of his usurpation, and thought that in return the king ought to refuse nothing to him.

In sheer lawless wrath at the king's refusal to hear him, Northumberland resolved to dethrone Henry. He secretly concerted measures with Owen Glendower for a joint attack on the king, and released his captive, the Earl of Douglas, who in return brought him a band of Scottish auxiliaries. By Owen's counsel, aid was sought from France also, and it was settled that the young Earl of March should be proclaimed king, if Richard II. proved to be really dead.

In July, 1403, the Percies rose, and were joined by their kinsman the Earl of Worcester, and many more. Hotspur rapidly led his army towards Shrewsbury, where Glendower had promised to join him with a Welsh host. But King Henry was too quick for his foes ; he threw himself between them, and caught the young Percy before the Welsh came up. The desperately fought battle of Shrewsbury (July 23, 1403) ended in the victory of the royal host. Hotspur was slain by an arrow, while Douglas and Worcester were taken, and the latter executed for treason. It was at this field that the king's eldest son, Henry of Monmouth, destined in later years to be the conqueror of France, first looked upon the face of war.

The Earl of Northumberland, who had not been present at Shrewsbury, but had kept at home in the north, was allowed to make his peace with the king on the payment of a great fine. But Henry was wrong in thinking that the crafty and resentful old earl was no longer dangerous. Though his brave son was dead, Percy stirred up a second rebellion two years later, by the aid of Mowbray, Earl of Nottingham, son of Henry's old opponent in the lists of Coventry,* and of Scrope, Archbishop of York, brother of that Scrope, Earl of Wilts, whom the Lancastrians had hung in

**Rebellion of
the Percies.**

**Battle of
Shrewsbury.—
Death of
Hotspur.**

**Second Rebel-
lion.—Execu-
tion of Scrope.**

* See p. 219.

1399. But Neville, Earl of Westmoreland, who commanded for the king in the North, induced Scrope and Mowbray to lay down their arms and come to a conference, and there he seized them as traitors. They were at once put on trial, not before their peers as they claimed, but before two of the king's justices, who condemned them to death. Scrope's execution sent a thrill of horror throughout England, for no archbishop had ever before been slain by a king, save Thomas Becket, and many men counted him a martyr even as Becket. So Henry lost as much love of the clergy by this act as he had gained by his assent to the statute *De Heretico Comburendo*.

Northumberland escaped to Scotland in 1405, and lurked there for two years; but in 1407 he crossed the Tweed, raised his vassals, and made a dash for York. But he was intercepted at Bramham Moor, and there slain, fighting hard in spite of his seventy years.

After this King Henry was no more vexed with civil war in England, but his Welsh troubles showed no sign of ending. Owen Glendower eluded Henry, Prince of Wales, and all the other leaders who came against him, with complete success, and the English armies suffered so severely from storms among the Welsh hills that they swore that Owen was a magician and had conjured the elements against them.

It was the constant drain of money for this interminable war that kept the king in strict submission to his Parliament, so that he was obliged to allow them to audit all his accounts, and even to dismiss his servants when they thought that he kept too large and wasteful a household. Henry's submission to Parliament.—
The Beauforts. Henry much disliked this control, but he always bowed before it. His health was failing, though he was still in middle age, and bodily weakness seems to have bent his will. From 1409 to 1412 he was so feeble that the government was really carried on by his son, the Prince of Wales, and his half-brothers, the Beauforts, Henry, Bishop of Winchester, and Thomas, the Chancellor. Of the Beaufort clan we shall hear much in the future; they were the sons of John of Gaunt's old age. After the death of his wife, Constance of Castile, a lady named Katharine Swinford became his mistress and bore him several sons. He afterwards married her, and the children were legitimatized by Act of Parliament. Of these the eldest

was now Earl of Somerset, and the youngest Bishop of Winchester.

It was fortunate for England in these years, when the realm was ruled by a bedridden king and a very young Prince of Wales, that her neighbours to north and south had fallen on evil days. Neither Scot nor Frenchman was dangerous at this time. The Scots were bridled by the fact that the heir of the kingdom was in Henry's hands. For it chanced that King Robert III. was sending his son James to France, and that the ship was taken by an English privateer. "Why did they not send him straight to me?" said King Henry; "I could have taught him French as well as any man at Paris." So Prince James was kept at Windsor as a hostage for the good behaviour of Scotland. His jealous uncle Albany, the regent of that kingdom, did not want him released, and was quite content to leave him in Henry's power and keep the peace.

The cause of the quiescence of France was very different. King Charles VI. had become insane, and no longer ruled. A desperate civil war had been raging there ever since the king's brother, the Duke of Orleans, had been murdered by his cousin, the Duke of Burgundy, in 1407. The partisans of the murdered duke, who were called the Armagnacs from their leader, Bernard, Count of Armagnac, were always endeavouring to revenge his death on Burgundy. They mustered most of the feudal nobility of France in their ranks, while their opponent was supported by the burghers of Paris and many of the towns of the north. John of Burgundy was lord of Flanders as well as of his own duchy, and was well able to hold his own even though his French partisans were outnumbered by the Armagnacs. Both factions sought the help of England, and King Henry was able to play a double game, and to negotiate with each of them on the terms that he should be given back some of the lost districts of Aquitaine in return for his aid. In the end he closed with the offers of the Armagnacs, and sent over a small army to Normandy under his second son, Thomas, Duke of Clarence. Clarence accomplished little, but the fact that his troops were able to march across France to Bordeaux with little hindrance taught the English that the French were too helpless and divided to be formidable (1412).

**Detention of
Prince James
of Scotland.**

**Civil War in
France.—Ar-
magnacs and
Burgundians.**

The lesson was taken to heart, as we shall see in the next reign.

While King Henry lay slowly dying of leprosy, his son, the Prince of Wales, was gaining the experience which was to serve him so well a few years later. Henry of Monmouth was a warrior from his youth up; at the age of fifteen he had been present at Shrewsbury field, and in the succeeding years he toiled in the hard school of the Welsh wars, leading expedition after expedition against Glyndower. The legendary tales which speak of him as a debauched and idle youth, who consorted with disreputable favourites, such as Shakespeare's famous "Sir John Falstaff," are entirely worthless. Of all these fables the only one that seems to have any foundation is that which tells how Henry was suspected by his father of overgreat ambition and of aiming at the crown. It appears that the prince's supporters, the two Beauforts, suggested to King Henry that he should abdicate, and pass on the sceptre to his son. The king was much angered at the proposal, turned the Beauforts out of office, and was for a time estranged from the Prince of Wales. This was the reason why he sent Clarence rather than his elder brother to conduct the war in France. He even removed Prince Henry from his position as head of the royal council. But this outburst of anger was the king's last flash of energy. He died of his lingering disease on March 20, 1413.

CHAPTER XVI.

HENRY V.

1413-1422.

HENRY of Monmouth had a far easier task before him, when he ascended the throne, than his father had been forced to take in hand. He had the enormous advantage of succeeding to an established heritage, and was no mere usurper legalized by parliamentary election. So firm did he feel himself upon his seat, that he began his reign by releasing the young Earl of March, the legitimate heir of Richard II., whom Henry IV. had always kept in close custody. For he knew that none of the odium of his father's usurpation rested upon himself, and that he was well liked by the nation. Nor was his popularity ill deserved ; though only twenty-five years of age, he was already a tried warrior and an able statesman. His life was sober and orderly, inclining rather toward Spartan rigour than display and luxury. He was grave and earnest in speech, courteous in all his dealings, and an enemy of flatterers and favourites. His sincere piety bordered on asceticism. If he had a fault, it was that he was somewhat over stern with those who withstood him, like his great ancestor Edward I. His enemies called him hard-hearted and sanctimonious.

Henry's piety and his love of order and orthodoxy were a source of much trouble to the unhappy Lollards. From the moment of his accession he bore very hardly upon them, and redoubled the severity of the persecution which his father had begun. He did not spare even his own friends, but arrested for heresy Sir John Oldcastle, Lord Cobham, who had been one of his most trusted servants. When accused of holding the doctrines of Wicliffe, Oldcastle boldly avowed his sympathy for them, spoke scornfully of

Persecution of
the Lollards.

the Papacy and its claims, and taunted his judge, Archbishop Arundel, with all the sins and failings of the clergy. He was condemned to be burnt, but escaped from the Tower and hid himself in the Marches of Wales. Long afterwards he was retaken, and suffered bravely for his opinions.

Henry's ill-treatment of the Lollards drove the unfortunate sectaries to despair. Some of the more reckless of them planned to put an end to their sufferings, by seizing the king's person, and compelling him to relax the persecution. They tried to stir up a popular rising, like that of Wat Tyler, but Henry got timely notice of their plot. When they began to assemble by night in St. Martin's fields, outside the gates of London, he came suddenly upon them with a great body of horse, and scattered them all. Forty were hung next day as traitors, and for the future they were treated as guilty of treason as well as of heresy.

Fortunately for England, Henry had other things in his mind besides the suppression of the Wicliffites. He knew that nothing serves so well to quiet down internal troubles as a successful and glorious foreign war. **Henry and the French crown.** He believed himself, and rightly, to be capable of leading the national forces to victory, and he knew that England's old neighbour and enemy across the Channel was weak and divided. Accordingly, from the moment of his accession Henry began to prepare for an assault on France. He was determined to claim not merely the restoration of the lost provinces of Guienne, but the crown of France itself, as Edward III. had done in the days before the treaty of Bretigny. It is hard to discover how a sincerely religious and right-minded man, for such Henry of Monmouth undoubtedly was, could persuade his conscience that it was permissible to vamp up once more these antiquated claims. It would seem that he regarded himself as a divinely appointed guardian of law, order, morality, and religion, and had come to look upon the French factions with their open wickedness, their treason, treachery, murder, and rapine, as emissaries of Satan handed over to him for punishment. Moreover, Henry was, as we have said, a very zealous servant of the Church, and the Church did its best to egg him on to the war. Chicheley, the Archbishop of Canterbury, was one of the chief supporters of it, partly because he wished to distract

attention from the persecution of the Lollards, and partly because Parliament had been talking of a proposal to confiscate some Church land, and the archbishop thought that he had better give them some other and more exciting subject of discussion. In his old age, Chicheley bitterly regretted his advice to King Henry, and built his college of All Souls at Oxford, to pray for the repose of those who had fallen in the great war which he had set going.

Before he had been a year upon the throne, Henry had broken with France. It was in vain that the Dauphin and the Armagnac faction, who were at this time
Preparations for war. predominant, endeavoured to turn him from his purpose. They offered him the hand of the Princess Catherine, the daughter of their mad king Charles VI., and with her the lost provinces of Aquitaine and a dowry of 600,000 gold crowns. But Henry only replied by asking for all that his ancestors had ever held in France, the ancient realm of Henry II., extending from Normandy to the Pyrenees. When this preposterous demand was refused, he summoned Parliament and laid before it his scheme for an invasion of France. The proposal was received with enthusiasm, partly from old national jealousy, partly because the English resented the doings of the French in the time of Henry IV., when Norman privateers had vexed the Channel ports, and French succour had been lent to Owen Glyndower and the Scots. The Commons and the clergy gave the king very liberal grants of money, which he increased by seizing the estates of the "alien priories," that is, the religious houses that were mere branches and dependencies of continental abbeys.

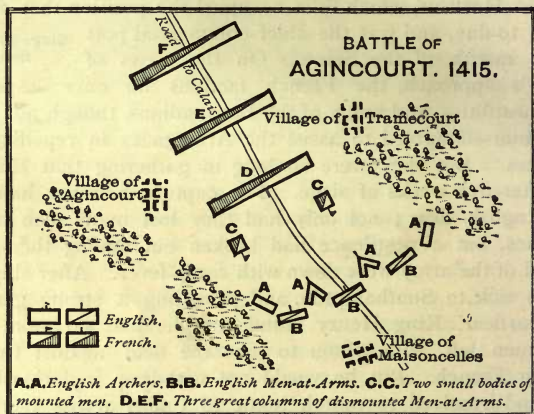
By spending every shilling that he could raise, and even pawning the crown jewels, the king collected and equipped a considerable army. He assembled at South-
Conspiracy of Cambridge and Scrope. ampton some 2500 men-at-arms and 7000 archers for the invasion. Just before he embarked, however, he found himself exposed to a deadly peril, which showed him how precarious was the hold of the Lancastrian dynasty on the throne. A plot had been formed by his cousin, Richard of Cambridge, the younger brother of that Edmund of Rutland who betrayed the rebels of 1399. It had as its object the murder of Henry and the coronation of Edmund, Earl of March,

whose sister Richard had married. In the plot were implicated Lord Scrope, a kinsman of the archbishop whom Henry IV. had executed and several others who had grievances against the house of Lancaster. The king sent them all to the block, and would not delay his sailing for a moment.

He landed in Normandy late in the summer of 1415, and laid siege to Harfleur, which then occupied the position that Havre enjoys to-day, and was the chief commercial port at the mouth of the Seine. On the news of ^{Siege of Har-}
^{fleur.} Henry's approach, the French factions for once suspended their hostilities, and many of the Burgundians, though not Duke John himself, agreed to assist the Armagnacs in repelling the invaders. But they were so long in gathering that Harfleur fell, after five weeks of siege. The capture, however, had cost the English dear; not only had they lost many men in the trenches, but a pestilence had broken out among them, and a third of the army were down with camp-fever. After shipping off his sick to Southampton, and providing a strong garrison for Harfleur, King Henry found that he had no more than 6000 men left, with whom to take the field against the oncoming French. But he would not withdraw ingloriously by sea, and resolved to march home to Calais across Northern France. This enterprise savoured of rashness, for the whole country-side was swarming with the levies of the enemy. They had placed the Constable of France, John d'Albret, in command: with him were the young Duke of Orleans and all the rest of the Armagnac leaders. Anthony of Brabant, brother to the Duke of Burgundy, was hurrying to their aid from the north. By rapid movements—his whole army, archers as well as men-at-arms, had been provided with horses taken from the country-side—Henry reached the Somme. But he lost time in trying to force a passage, and when at last he crossed the river high up, near Peronne, the Constable and his host had outmarched him and thrown themselves across the road to Calais. They were at least 30,000 strong, five times the force that Henry could put in line, and were in excellent condition, while the English were worn out by their long travel, amid violent October rains, and over bad country cross-roads.

When King Henry reached Agincourt, he found the French

army drawn up across his path, and was forced to halt. The Constable, like King John at Poitiers, was confident that he had the English in a trap, for they had exhausted all their provisions, and had the flooded Somme in their rear. Henry, however, was determined to fight, and put his hope in the bad management which always characterized



the disorderly armies of feudal France. He was not disappointed: the Constable dismounted all his knights and bade them fight on foot, for fear of the effect of the archery on their horses. Only a few hundred mounted men formed a forlorn hope in front. He arranged his army in three heavy columns, one behind another, and formed the front entirely of mailed men-at-arms; the cross-bowmen and light troops were placed in the rear, where they could be of no possible use. The week had been rainy, and the space in front of the French was a newly ploughed field sodden with water, and hemmed in with woods and villages on either hand. At its further end the English were waiting. Henry had drawn them up in a single four-deep line, in order to make a front equal to that of the enemy. So arranged they just filled the space between the woods. The archers were on the wings, protected by *chevaux-de-frise* of pointed stakes which they had planted in front. The king with his men-at-arms formed the centre; a

small flanking force of archers had also been sent into the woods on the right.

The Constable led his men straight on the English front, but they had a mile to go across the greasy mud of the fields. To men arrayed in the full knightly panoply, which had vastly increased in weight since the days of Edward III., the ploughland was almost impassable. After a space they began to sink as far as their ankles, and presently as far as their knees, in the mud. The mounted men struggled on, and gradually drew near the English, but they were shot down one after another as they slowly forced themselves up to the stakes of the archery. The main body of the first column never won its way so far; it literally stuck fast in the tenacious clay and stood a few score yards from the English line, as a target into which the archers emptied whole sheaves of arrows. The crowded mass was soon full of dead and dying, for at such short range armour could not protect its wearers. The whole column reeled and wavered. Then King Henry, seeing the moment was come, bade his whole line charge. The lightly equipped archers could cross with ease the ploughland where the men-at-arms had found themselves unable to move. They flung themselves upon the French knights, and by the force and fury of their assault completely rolled them over. Though unprotected by mail, they obtained a complete ascendancy over the enemy, dashing them down with their axes and maces till they lay in heaps two or three deep. Henry and the band of men-at-arms around him seem to have met with the only stubborn resistance: the king had to fight hard for his life, and was nearly slain by the Duke of Alençon, who had already struck down his younger brother Humphrey, Duke of Gloucester. Alençon, however, was slain, and after his fall the whole of his column was destroyed or captured.

Without a moment's hesitation, the English pushed on to attack the second column, which was slowly advancing through the mud to aid the van. Incredible as it may appear, their second charge was as successful as the first, though the victors were exhausted and thinned in numbers by the previous fighting, and did not muster half their adversaries' force. Just after he had routed this second column, Henry received an alarm that a detached body of the French had assailed his camp in the

rear, and were coming up to surround him. He at once bade his men slay the prisoners they had taken, a harsh and, as it proved, an unnecessary order, for the French in the rear only plundered the camp, and then dispersed with their booty. Although the king had completely scattered or destroyed the second French column, the third still remained in order before him ; but, cowed by the fate of their comrades, they turned and retired hastily from the field, though they should by themselves have been more than enough to overwhelm the exhausted band of English.

In this astonishing victory, Henry's small army had slain a much larger number of men than they mustered in their own ranks. The Constable of France, Anthony, Duke of Brabant—brother of John of Burgundy—the Dukes of Bar and Alençon, and a whole crowd of counts and barons, had fallen ; it is said that no less than 10,000 French were slain, of whom more than 8000 were men of gentle blood. In spite of the massacre of captives in the midst of the fighting, there were still some prisoners surviving. They included the young Duke of Orleans—the titular head of the Armagnac faction—the Duke of Bourbon, the Counts of Eu and Vendome, and 1500 knights and nobles more. The English in this terrible fight had lost less than 200 men, but among them were two great peers, the Duke of York—the Edmund of Rutland of whom we read in 1399—and the Earl of Suffolk.

Henry retraced his way to Calais, and crossed to England with his prisoners and his booty, there to be received with splendid festivities by his people, who regarded **Henry returns to England.** the glory of Agincourt as a sufficient compensation for the losses of a costly campaign which had added nothing save the single town of Harfleur to the possessions of the English crown. The ransoms of a host of noble captives were relied upon to replenish the exchequer, and the fearful losses of the Armagnac party, who saw half their leaders slain at Agincourt, would evidently weaken the strength of France in the remainder of the war.

Henry did not cross the Channel again in the year 1416, which he spent partly in negotiations with the Duke of Burgundy, whose help he wished to secure against the Armagnacs, partly in treating with the Emperor Sigismund about the

common welfare of Christendom. Sigismund was hard at work endeavouring to put an end to the "Great Schism," the scandalous breach in the unity of the Church caused by the misconduct of the rival Popes at Rome and Avignon. He visited England, and won Henry's aid for his plans, which brought about the reunion of Christendom at the Council of Constance—a reunion under evil auspices, since it was marked by the burning of the great Bohemian teacher John Huss, who had made the doctrines of Wicliffe popular among his Slavonic countrymen in the far East. Moreover, it restored the unity of Christendom, but did not reform either the papacy or the national Churches. As this was not done, the general outbreak of religious ferment was made inevitable in a later generation; after the failure at Constance to reform the Church from within, it became necessary to reform her from without.

End of the
Great Schism.
—Council of
Constance.

Having come to an agreement with the Duke of Burgundy, and obtained from him a promise of neutrality, Henry invaded France for the second time in the summer of 1417. He took with him an army of somewhat over 16,000 men, landed in Normandy, and began to reduce one after another all the fortresses of that province. Utterly humbled by the memory of Agincourt, the Armagnacs made no attempt to meet him in the open field. Some of the Norman towns held out gallantly enough, but they got no aid from without. At the end of a year the whole duchy, save its capital, the city of Rouen, was in English hands. Henry then assumed the state of Duke of Normandy, and put the whole land under orderly government, a boon it had not enjoyed for twenty years. He gave Norman baronies and earldoms to many of his English followers, and handed over the control of the cities to burghers of the Burgundian faction, who served the English readily enough, out of their hatred for the Armagnacs. For thirty years Normandy was to remain English. Rouen was added to the rest of the duchy after a long siege of six months, in which half the population perished by hunger. Irritated by this long resistance, Henry imposed on it the harsh terms of a ransom of 300,000 crowns, and hung Alain Blanchart, the citizen who had been the soul of the obstinate defence (January, 1419).

Second inva-
sion of France.
—Conquest of
Normandy.

While the conquest of Normandy was in progress, the French factions had been more bitterly at strife than ever. In 1418 the Burgundian party in Paris rose against their rivals, and massacred every man on whom they could lay hands, including Bernard of Armagnac himself. The control of the party of the feudal noblesse then passed into the hands of the young dauphin Charles, the heir of France.

The fall of Rouen, however, frightened John of Burgundy, and unwilling that France should fall wholly into the power of his ally King Henry, he made proposals for a reconciliation with the Dauphin and his Armagnac followers. The treacherous young prince accepted the overtures with apparent cordiality, and invited Duke John to meet him on the bridge of Montereau to settle terms of peace. But when Burgundy came to the conference, he was deliberately slain by the Armagnac captains, in the presence and with the consent of the Dauphin (August, 1419).

The murder of Montereau was destined to make Henry master of France. When Philip of Burgundy, the son of Duke John, heard of his father's death, he vowed unending war against the Dauphin and his faction, and took the field to help the English to complete the conquest of France. Nor was Philip of Burgundy the only helper that Henry secured : the Queen of France, Isabella of Bavaria, bitterly hated her son the Dauphin, and was glad to do him an evil turn. She proposed that Charles should be disinherited, and that the crown should pass with her favourite daughter Catherine to the hands of the English king. So at Troyes, in Champagne, Henry, Philip of Burgundy, and Queen Isabella concluded a formal treaty by which Henry received Catherine to wife, and was to succeed to the French throne on the death of his father-in-law, the old King Charles VI., who still lingered on in complete imbecility (June 2, 1420).

The treaty of Troyes put Paris and the greater part of Northern France into Henry's hands. Casting national feeling aside in their bitter partisan spirit, the Burgundian faction everywhere accepted the King of England as the lawful regent and governor of France. South of the Loire the Dauphin and his Armagnac friends still held their own, but north of it they only possessed

**Murder of the
Duke of Bur-
gundy.**

**Treaty of
Troyes.**

**Henry master
of Northern
France.**

scattered fortresses dotted about in Picardy, the Isle-de-France, and Champagne, from Boulogne in the north to Orleans in the south.

After taking formal possession of Paris and holding a great meeting of the Estates of the French realm at Rouen, Henry returned in triumph to England with his young wife. He had reached a pitch of success in war such as no English king had ever attained before, and the nation, blinded by the personal merits of its king and gorged with the plunder of France, forgave him all his faults. The waste of life and money, the never-ending persecution of the Lollards, the precarious tenure of the conquests in France—due, in sober truth, merely to the aid of the Burgundian faction—were all forgotten.

Henry had not long been in England, when bad news crossed the Channel after him. He had left his brother Thomas, Duke of Clarence, with a small army, to hold Maine against the Dauphin's adherents. But the Armagnac bands had lately been strengthened by succours from Scotland, under the Earl of Buchan, the son of the regent Albany. For, although the King of Scots had been a prisoner in English hands for ten years and more, his subjects and his uncle the regent were not thereby constrained to keep the peace with England. Pushing forward rashly to attack the Scots and Armagnacs, Clarence was routed and slain at Beaugé (1421). The enemy at once overran Maine, and began to infest the borders of Normandy.

Defeat of the
English at
Beaugé.

This compelled the king to cross once more over the sea in order to repair his brother's disastrous defeat. In a campaign extending from the summer of 1421 to that of the following year, he cleared the Dauphin's army out of their foothold north of the Loire, and then proceeded to starve out one by one their isolated strongholds in the north of France, the chief of which were Dreux and Meaux.

Henry's third
expedition.

It was during the siege of Meaux, which continued all the winter of 1421 and spring of 1422, that Henry's health began to give dangerous signs of breaking up. He had been campaigning from his boyhood, and had never hitherto shown any weakness of constitution.

Siege of
Meaux.—Death
of Henry.

But the winter colds of 1421-2, or the camp-fever bred in the

trenches during the long siege of Meaux, had brought him very low. He was carried back toward Paris in a desperate state of weakness from ague and dysentery. Soon after, to the horror and dismay of the English and their French partisans, he died at the castle of Vincennes on August 31, 1422, before he had attained his thirty-fifth year.

CHAPTER XVII.

THE LOSS OF FRANCE.

1422-1453.

ENGLAND had never yet had a sovereign of such tender age as the infant king who succeeded to the heritage of Henry V. It was under the rule of a child of less than twelve months old that the long and wearisome French war had to be continued. Yet at first the prospects of the reign did not look very dark. The struggle in France was not going ill, and seldom has any orphan had so zealous and capable a guardian by his cradle as John of Bedford, the little king's eldest uncle. He had, moreover, no domestic intrigues to fear; Edmund, Earl of March, the legitimate heir of Richard II., was the most unenterprising and loyal of men, and never gave any trouble.

On his death-bed Henry V. had not appointed his eldest and most capable brother, John of Bedford, to be the regent in England, as might have been expected. His ruling passion was strong in death, and he thought The Regency. above all things of the maintenance of the English ascendancy in France. Therefore he named Duke John to take charge of the government of that country. As Regent of England he designated his younger brother Humphrey, Duke of Gloucester, a man of far less worth and weight. The Parliament, however, held that the king could not dispose of the regency by will; and though they named Gloucester Protector, placed many limitations on his power. Unfortunately, they could not remedy his reckless and flighty disposition.

During the whole of the long minority of Henry VI. the varying fortunes of the French war were almost the only topic that

stirred the interest of the nation. The internal history of England is well-nigh a blank ; no period since the Conquest is left so bare by the chroniclers, who seem to have no eyes or ears for anything save the fate of our armies across the Channel. The quarrels of Duke Humphrey with his colleagues in the regency are the only other topic on which they touch. The council carried out the policy of the late king, so far as any body of statesmen of average ability can continue the work of a single man of high military and political genius. They strained every nerve to keep up the war in France, and subordinated every other end to that purpose. Their wisest act was the release of the young King of Scots, after seventeen years of captivity. Seeing that his kinsman Albany was helping the French, they set James I. free, and sent him home. He married, ere he departed, Joan Beaufort, daughter of the Earl of Somerset, and grand-daughter of John of Gaunt, a lady for whom he had formed a romantic attachment in the days of his captivity. By her influence it was hoped that he would be kept firm in the English alliance. In some degree this hope was fulfilled : James promptly slew his cousins of Albany, and devoted himself to pacifying and bringing back into order the country from which he had been so long exiled.

James I. of
Scotland re-
leased.

We must now turn to the aspect of affairs beyond the Channel, the subject which seemed all-important to the English nation at this time. The old mad King of France had died only two months after his son-in-law, Henry V. (October, 1422). Bedford had, therefore, to proclaim his little nephew as king at Paris, and to rule in his name, no longer in that of the unhappy Charles VI. The Dauphin also assumed the title of King of France, and was acknowledged as monarch in all the lands south of the Loire. But he was an indolent and apathetic young man, governed entirely by his favourites, and wholly unskilled in and averse to military enterprises. He did so little for himself, and seemed so contented with his unsatisfactory position, that men called him in scorn "the King of Bourges"—his residence for the time—rather than the King of France.

Death of
Charles VI.—
Henry pro-
claimed King
of France.

There still appeared to be some chance that the English might maintain themselves in possession of Northern France. But this hope rested entirely on the firm and continued fidelity

of the Burgundian party to their English allies. It was only by their help that success could be won, for ten or fifteen thousand English scattered from Calais to Bordeaux could not hold down a hostile France. For some time the Duke of Burgundy aided Bedford, and the Burgundian citizens in each town maintained their loyalty to King Henry.

Bedford's regency commenced with two victories, at Cravant (July, 1423) and Verneuil (August, 1424), which so tamed the Dauphin's partisans that the English were able to work slowly west and south, subduing the land. More would have been done, but for a sudden risk of a breach with Burgundy, caused by the reckless selfishness of the Duke of Gloucester.

**Victories of
Bedford.**

Tired of long bickerings with his uncle, Bishop Beaufort of Winchester, and the other members of the council of regency, Humphrey had resolved to go off on an enterprise of his own. There was at this moment a distressed princess in the Netherlands, Jacqueline, Duchess of Holland and Countess of Hainault. She had married Philip of Burgundy's cousin, the Duke of Brabant, a stupid debauchee who treated her very ill. Escaping from his court, she fled to London, and offered herself and her lands to Duke Humphrey, if he would take her under his protection. Of course, a divorce from her husband had first to be procured; but the pope refused to grant it. In spite of this trifling difficulty, Gloucester performed a ceremony of marriage with Jacqueline, though both of them were well aware that it was a rank case of bigamy. They then crossed to the continent to take possession of her dominions, which were held by her husband, John of Brabant. This, of course, meant war; and not only war with Brabant, but with Burgundy also, for Duke Philip was the close ally of Duke John, and had no wish to see Gloucester established in his neighbourhood as ruler of Hainault and Holland.

**Gloucester's
expedition to
Hainault.**

Both Bedford and the English council of regency completely disavowed Gloucester's doings, but it was hard to persuade Burgundy that England had not determined to break with him. If Gloucester had been successful, there is no doubt that Burgundy would have joined the French and driven the English out of France. But

**Threatened
breach with
Burgundy.**

fortunately for Bedford, his brother proved singularly unlucky in Hainault. Seeing himself outnumbered and surrounded by the Brabanters and Burgundians, Humphrey left his quasi-wife in the lurch, and fled back to England. The bigamous duchess fell into the hands of her enemies, and was placed in confinement. Gloucester took the news with equanimity, and consoled himself by marrying Eleanor Cobham, a lady of damaged reputation, whom he had known long before.

Owing to Gloucester's failure in Hainault, the breach between England and Burgundy did not widen into open disruption, but Duke Philip never again supported his allies with such vigour as in the earlier days of the war.

**Siege of
Orleans.**

It was not till 1428 that the English felt strong enough to make a fresh advance against the lands beyond the Loire. In that year the regent Bedford succeeded in equipping a small field army of five or six thousand men—half English, half French partisans of England. Placing them under Thomas Montacute, Earl of Salisbury, one of the best captains who had served Henry V., he sent them southward. Salisbury at first aimed at taking Angers, but turned aside to besiege Orleans, the key of the central valley of the Loire, and the one place of importance beyond that river which the French still held. On the 7th of October, 1428, he took post in front of it, and built strong redoubts facing each of its gates, for he had not a large enough army to surround so great a city. Thus Orleans was blockaded rather than besieged, since it was always possible for the French to get in or out in small parties between the fortified positions of the English.

Orleans held out long and stubbornly, and while its siege still dragged on, a new factor was suddenly introduced into the struggle. The widespread misery and devastation caused by thirteen years of uninterrupted war had moved the hearts of the French to despair; the people lay inert and passive, hating the English, but caring little for the despicable Charles and his Armagnac court at Bourges. It was left for a simple peasant girl to turn this apathy into energy, and to send forth the whole people of France on a wild crusade against the invader.

Jeanne d'Arc was the daughter of a villager of Domrémy, on the borders of Champagne. She was from her youth a girl of

a mystic, visionary piety, who believed herself to be visited by dreams and visions from on high, which guided her in all the actions of her life. At the age of eighteen her "voices," as she called them, began to give her the strange command to go forth and deliver France from the English, whose arrogance and cruelty had moved the wrath of Heaven. Jeanne doubted the meaning of these hard sayings, but in repeated visions she thought that she saw St. Michael and St. Catherine appear to her, and bid her go to the Dauphin Charles and cause him to place her at the head of his armies. She resolved to obey their behests, and betook herself to Chinon, where she presented herself before the prince. Charles at first treated her slightly, and his courtiers and captains laughed her to scorn. But she vehemently insisted on the importance of her mission, and at last made some impression on the Dauphin's weak and wavering mind. Apparently she revealed to him a secret known to himself alone, by some sort of clairvoyance. Charles resolved to give her mission a trial, and his captains agreed that perchance the company of an inspired prophetess might put heart into their dispirited troops. Jeanne's "voices" bade her clothe herself in knightly armour, display a white banner before her, and ride at the head of the Dauphin's men to the relief of Orleans. They promised her complete success in the enterprise, and prophesied that she should lead the prince in triumph to Rheims, and there crown him King of France.

In April, 1429, Jeanne entered Orleans with a convoy of food and a small troop of men-at-arms. The townsmen needed her encouragement, but their English foes outside were also in evil case. The task was too great for the little army of the besiegers, who had already lost many men, and had seen their leader, Thomas of Salisbury, slain by a cannon-shot as he was reconnoitering the walls. The Earl of Suffolk, who succeeded him, still held his ring of fortified posts round the city, on both sides of the Loire, but was quite unable to prevent food and reinforcements from entering it. Nevertheless the men of Orleans sorely needed the aid that Jeanne brought; for the Dauphin seemed to have abandoned them, and they had begun to despair. The success of Jeanne's mission was settled from the moment when the burghers of Orleans hailed her as a deliverer, and placed

*Jeanne enters
Orleans.—The
siege raised.*

themselves at her disposal. If they had doubted and sneered, like the Dauphin's courtiers at Chinon, she could have done nothing. But the moment that she was within the walls, she bade the garrison arm and sally forth to attack the English redoubts that ringed them in. Her first effort was crowned with success; a sudden assault carried the nearest fort before succour could reach it from Suffolk's camp. The men of Orleans cried that Jeanne was indeed a prophetess and a deliverer sent by God, and henceforth followed her with a blind devotion which nothing could turn back or repel. It was in vain that the mercenary captains of the Dauphin's host endeavoured to moderate the reckless vigour of Jeanne's movements. After her first success she bade the garrison go on and conquer, and on four continuous days of fighting led them against the entrenchments of the English. One after another they fell, for the French were now fighting with a force and fury which nothing could resist. "Before that day," says the chronicler, "two hundred English would drive five hundred French before them. But now two hundred French would beat and chase four hundred English." The invaders came to dread the approach of Jeanne's white standard with a superstitious fear; they declared that she was a witch, and that the powers of hell fought behind her. At last Suffolk was fain to burn his camp, and to withdraw northwards with the remnant of his host.

But the disasters of the English were not yet ended. Jeanne had no intention of allowing them to remain unmolested; the troops who had already fought under her were ready to follow her anywhere, and the peasants and burghers all over France were beginning to take up arms, "now that the Lord had shown himself on the side of the Dauphin." With a host largely increased by fresh levies, Jeanne went to seek the English, and caught them up at Patay. There she charged them suddenly, "before the archers had even time to fix their stakes," and destroyed almost the whole force, taking captive Lord Talbot, its commander.

Jeanne now bade the Dauphin come forth from his seclusion and follow her to Rheims, the old crowning-place of the French kings. He obeyed, and brought a great host with him. At the approach of "the Maid of Orleans," as Jeanne was now styled, fortress after fortress in Champagne yielded. The regent Bedford was too weak in men

The Dauphin
crowned at
Rheims.

to quit Paris, and so Jeanne was able to fulfil her promise by leading Charles to Rheims and there witnessing his coronation (July 17, 1429).

She then declared that her mission was ended, and asked to be allowed to return home to her father's house. But Charles would not suffer it, because of the enormous advantage that her presence gave to the French arms. She then bade him strike at Paris, the heart of the English possessions in France. For the first time in her career she failed; the Burgundian citizens manned their walls too well, and served their faction rather than their country. Jeanne was wounded in a fruitless assault on the city, and had to withdraw. But her campaign was not fruitless; Soissons, Laon, Beauvais, Senlis, Compiègne, Troyes, and well-nigh the whole of Isle-de-France and Champagne, were recovered from the English. The land which Bedford ruled as regent was now reduced to a triangular patch, with the sea as its base and Paris as its apex, and included little more than Normandy, Picardy, and Maine.

In spite of her failure at Paris, the prestige of the Maid of Orleans was still unbroken; she went on winning place after place for King Charles, though he supported her very grudgingly, and left her to depend on the enthusiasm of the people rather than the royal arm. But her career came suddenly to an end; while endeavouring to relieve Compiègne, then besieged by a Burgundian army, she was unhorsed in a skirmish, and fell into the hands of the enemy. Philip of Burgundy would not slay the maid himself, but he meanly sold her for ten thousand crowns to the English, though he knew that Bedford regarded her as a witch, and was resolved to punish her as such.

Successes and
capture of
Jeanne.

The cruel tragedy which followed will always leave a deep stain on the character of the regent, who in all other matters showed himself a just and righteous man. Jeanne was kept for many months in prison, subjected to cruel and ribald treatment, and examined again and again by bigoted ecclesiastics who were determined to prove her a witch. She constantly withstood them with a firm piety which moved their wrath, maintaining that her visions and voices were from God, and that all her acts had been done with His aid. After much quibbling, cross-examination, and persecution, a tribunal

Jeanne burnt.

of French clergy, headed by the Bishop of Beauvais, pronounced her a sorceress and heretic, and handed her over to the secular arm for execution ; the English, therefore, burnt her alive in the market-place of Rouen (May, 1431). Her callous master, Charles VII., made no attempt to save her, and seems to have viewed her fate with complete indifference.

Though Jeanne had met a martyr's death, her cause continued to prosper. The spell of the invincibility of the English had been broken, and with their inferior numbers they could no longer resist the French assaults, in which nobles, burghers, and peasants now all united with a single heart. It was in vain that Bedford brought over the little ten-year-old Henry VI. from England, and crowned him at Paris (1431). The ceremony was attended by hardly a single Frenchman ; even the Burgundian faction in the capital were beginning to doubt and draw apart from their old allies.

Meanwhile in England the continued ill-success of the war was leading to the growth of a peace party, at whose head was Henry Beaufort, the Bishop of Winchester, who had lately become a cardinal. That Beaufort supported any scheme was a sufficient reason for Gloucester to oppose it, and Humphrey made himself the mouthpiece of those who pleaded for perpetual war. The cardinal and the duke quarrelled in and out of Parliament, their followers were always brawling, and the action of the council of regency grew weak and divided.

At last Beaufort prevailed on the council to submit proposals for peace to the French court. At Arras the ambassadors of Henry VI., Charles VII., and Philip of Burgundy met, and strove to come to terms (1435). But the English still insisted on claiming the pompous style of King of France for their young master, and on retaining Paris and all the North for him. The French were only ready to grant Normandy and Guienne, and insisted on the renunciation of Henry's French title. It cannot be doubted that these terms were quite reasonable, but they were rejected, with the most disastrous results. Philip of Burgundy was now tired of the struggle, and thought that he had sufficiently revenged his father's murder by fifteen years of war with the murderer. On the ground that the English had rejected fair conditions of

**Weakness of
the English.**

**Dissensions in
the Regency.**

**Peace pro-
posals.—Bur-
gundy joins
the French.**

peace, he broke off his alliance with them, and made terms with Charles of France. He got Picardy and the counties of Macon and Auxerre as the price of his change of alliance.

Just as the Congress of Arras was breaking up, John of Bedford died, worn out before his time by his fourteen years of toilsome government in France. The breach with the Duke of Burgundy and the death of Bedford had the results that might have been expected.

Death of Bedford.—Fall of Paris.

With one common accord the last French partisans of England threw off their allegiance to Henry VI. Paris itself opened its gates to the troops of Charles VII., and the English had soon to stand on the defensive in Normandy and Maine, their last foothold in Northern France (1437).

Nothing is more astonishing than the obstinate way in which the English government clung to the last remnants of the conquests of Henry V. By desperate and unremitting exertions the war was kept up in Normandy for no less than twelve years after Paris fell (1437-49). The heroes of this struggle were the veteran

Struggle for Normandy.—Richard, Duke of York.

Talbot, Earl of Shrewsbury, and the young Richard, Duke of York, who had just begun to come to the front. This prince was the son of that Richard Earl of Cambridge, who had paid with his life for his attempt to overturn Henry V. He was Duke of York as successor to his uncle Edmund, who fell at Agincourt, and Earl of March in right of his mother, the sister of the childless Edmund Mortimer, the last male of his house. York was governor in Normandy during the most important years of the struggle for the retention of the duchy, and gained much credit for repeatedly driving back the invasions which the French launched against it. He grew intoxicated with success, and made himself a prominent supporter of the unwise war-policy which Humphrey of Gloucester continued to advocate.

Meanwhile Cardinal Beaufort and the party which opposed Duke Humphrey—its chief members were Beaufort's nephews John and Edmund, successively Earls of Somerset, and William de la Pole, Earl of Suffolk—were always watching for an opportunity of concluding a peace with France. Whenever they took negotiations in hand they were denounced by Gloucester as the hirelings of Charles VII., but they persisted in their purpose. In 1444 they

Treaty of Tours.—Marriage of Henry.

thought that they had achieved it, for the French king, wearied by constant repulses in Normandy, consented to make a truce for two years, and to treat for a definite peace. He signed the compact at Tours, and ratified it by giving the hand of his kinswoman Margaret of Anjou to the young king Henry VI.; in consideration of the treaty, the English were to surrender Maine and its fortresses, while retaining Normandy entire.

Gloucester and Richard of York saluted this wise marriage and treaty with loud cries of wrath. They said that the Earl of Suffolk, who negotiated it, must have been sold to France, and spoke of the surrender of the fortresses of Maine as treason to the English crown. The greater part of the nation believed them to be right, for Humphrey and Richard were both popular with the masses, and it soon became a matter of faith that the Beauforts and Suffolk had betrayed their young master.

A strong king might have crushed this unwise opposition to peace. But Henry VI., who had now reached his majority, was anything but a strong king. He was frail and feeble both in body and mind, a simple soul much given to exercises of piety and to quiet study. He always sought some stronger arm on which to lean, and when he had chosen his friends, wisely or unwisely, he clung to them with the obstinacy that so often accompanies weakness. Worst of all, he had inherited a taint of madness from his grandfather, the insane Charles VI. of France, and from time to time his brain was clouded by fits of apathetic melancholy. Henry had learnt to trust his great-uncle Cardinal Beaufort and his minister Suffolk; he would never listen to any accusation against them. His views were shared by the fiery young queen, who soon began to rule him by dint of her stronger will.

The truce of Tours lasted for some three years. During this space the factions in England grew fiercer than ever, and in 1447 came to a head. At a Parliament at Bury St. Edmunds, Gloucester was suddenly arrested by order of Suffolk and the queen, and charged with treason. He died within a few days, probably from an apoplectic seizure, and not from any foul play. But it was natural that the rumour should get abroad that Suffolk had secretly murdered him.

Indignation in
England.

Feebleness of
Henry.

Death of the
Duke of Glou-
cester and
Cardinal Beau-
fort.

Gloucester was only outlived for a few weeks by his life-long rival, the old Cardinal Beaufort. Their deaths cleared the way for the rise of new men : the Cardinal's place at the head of the peace party was taken by Suffolk and Edmund Beaufort, Duke of Somerset, men of far lower stamp than the old churchman, who, though proud and worldly, had always done his best to serve England. Suffolk and Somerset were busy, self-important, self-seeking men, and coveted power and office for their own private ends. The Duke of York, who succeeded to Duke Humphrey's position, was a far more capable man, but he was committed to the hopelessly unpractical programme of perpetual war with France. His position, too, was rendered difficult by the fact that Duke Humphrey's death had made him next heir to the throne after the feeble young king, for there was now no other male of the house of Lancaster surviving. The queen, Suffolk, and Somerset began to look on him with suspicion, and he had to walk warily lest charges of treason should be brought against him, as they had been against his cousin of Gloucester. Meanwhile he was fain to accept the position of Lord Deputy of Ireland, which kept him out of harm's way.

In 1449 the truce with France which had accompanied the king's marriage was broken, by the gross fault of his minister Suffolk. Some of the Norman garrisons were left so long unpaid that they broke into mutiny, *Renewal of the war.* crossed the border, and sacked the rich Breton town of Fougères. Failing to get satisfaction from Suffolk for this outrage, Charles VII. declared war. Normandy was now in the charge of Somerset, a man of very different calibre from Richard of York, who had held it against such odds in the days before the truce of Tours. The French, on invading the duchy, swept the English before them with an ease that astonished even themselves. The peasants and townsfolk rose against their masters on every side, and gave the invaders their best help. Town after town fell ; Rouen, the capital of the duchy, was betrayed by traitors within the gates ; and the unhappy Somerset had to fall back on Caen. That town, with Cherbourg and Harfleur, was soon all that remained to the English on Norman soil.

This terrible news stirred up great wrath and indignation in England against Suffolk and Somerset. An army was hastily got ready at Portsmouth, and sent over to Cherbourg, with

orders to join Somerset at Caen. But the French threw themselves between, and forced the army of succour to give them battle at Formigny. At this disastrous fight well-nigh the whole English force was destroyed, overwhelmed by an attack from the rear at a moment when it was already engaged with a superior French army in front. Only its general, Sir Thomas Kyriel, and 400 men were granted quarter, while no less than 3000 were slain (April, 1450).

This disaster settled the fate of Normandy. Somerset was compelled to surrender Caen, and returned, covered with ignominy, to England. The other garrisons yielded one after another, and nothing remained of all the mighty conquests of Henry V. in Northern France.

Even before Formigny had been fought, or Caen had fallen, grave troubles had broken out in England. Suffolk had always been unpopular ever since he gave up Maine and signed the truce of Tours. The news of the loss of Rouen, and the other Norman towns, sufficed to ruin him. In spite of the king's continued assurance of his confidence in his minister, the House of Commons began to send up petitions against Suffolk, accusing him not only of losing Maine and Normandy, but of having sold himself for bribes to the King of France. Seditious riots in Kent and London gave point to the Commons' accusation. Cowed by such signs of danger, the feeble king removed Suffolk from office. The Commons then formally passed a bill of attainder against him for treasonable misconduct of the king's affairs during the last five years. But Henry would not allow his trusted servant to be harmed, gave him a formal pardon, and bade him go beyond seas till the trouble should blow over. Suffolk sailed for Calais, but in the Dover Straits his vessel was beset and captured by some London ships, which had been lying in wait for him. He was caught and beheaded after a mock trial, and his body was cast ashore on Dover Sands. The guilty parties in this extraordinary crime were never traced or convicted.

But the death of Suffolk did not imply the removal of Suffolk's friends from office. The king kept his ministry unchanged, a piece of obstinacy which provoked a fresh burst of popular indignation. In June, 1450, occurred the great political insurrection known as "Jack Cade's

Battle of Formigny.

Loss of Normandy.

The Commons attack the Earl of Suffolk.—His death.

Cade's rebellion.

Rebellion." John Aylmer or Cade was a soldier of fortune, who had served under the Duke of York in France and Ireland. He gave out that he was akin to the house of Mortimer, and that he was acting by the consent of his cousin, Duke Richard. His programme was the removal and punishment of the king's ministers, and the restoration of strong government and even-handed justice. His rising, in short, was political in its objects, and did not aim at redressing social evils only, like that of Wat Tyler. Possibly, Richard of York may have had some hand in the business, but we have no actual proof that he had egged Cade on.

All Kent and Sussex rose to join Cade, who advanced to Blackheath, and boldly sent in his demands to the king. Many of the Londoners favoured him, and the gates of the city opened at his approach. For a moment he was in possession of the capital. Smiting London Stone with his drawn sword, he cried, "Now is Mortimer Lord of London." He exercised his lordship by seizing and beheading Lord Say, the treasurer, and Crowmere, Sheriff of Kent, two friends of Suffolk. He would have done the same with others of the king's servants if he could have caught them. But this violence and the plundering of houses and shops by his disorderly followers provoked the citizens, who closed the gates and came to blows with the rebels. The king brought up armed retainers to help the Londoners, and after a space Cade's men dispersed on the promise of a royal pardon. Their leader, however, refused to take advantage of the amnesty, fled to the woods, and was tracked down and slain a few weeks later. His rising had failed mainly because he was a mere adventurer, and could not keep his followers in order.

But hardly had Cade fallen, when the Duke of York, whose name he had been using so freely, suddenly came over in person from Ireland to put himself at the head of the opposition. His first demand was a change of ministry, and especially the dismissal of Somerset, who had now returned from Normandy, and had been placed at the head of the king's council, as if he had come back covered with glory instead of with dishonour. But Henry and his queen were set on keeping their cousin of Beaufort in power, and York had for the time to hold back, lest he should be accused of open treason.

The Dukes of
York and
Somerset.

His opportunity of speaking with effect was not long in

coming. In 1451 the French attached Guienne, the last province

**Loss of over-sea where the English banner was still
Guienne.—The displayed. The loyal Gascons made a stout
Duke of York defence, but the king and Somerset sent them no
takes up arms. aid, and Bordeaux was finally compelled to surrender. The loss
of Guienne added the last straw to the burden of Somerset's
misdeeds. York, aided by several other peers, took up arms to
compel the king to send away his shiftless minister. Henry
called out an army, and faced York in Kent; but both were
unwilling to strike the first blow, and on receiving a promise
that Somerset should be dismissed, and tried before his peers, the
duke sent his men home.**

The king, however, with a want of faith that he rarely displayed, refused to put Somerset on trial, and retained him as his minister. He endeavoured to distract the attention of the nation from his favourite's misdoings, by proposing that a vigorous attempt should be made to recover Guienne. The Gascons hated the French conqueror, and had sent secret messages to London offering to rise if assured of English aid. No one could refuse their appeal, and with the consent of all parties a new army was enrolled for the recovery of Bordeaux. It was given to the charge of Talbot, Earl of Shrewsbury, the last survivor of the old captains of Henry V. The gallant veteran landed near Bordeaux with 5000 men, retook the city by the aid of its citizens, and overran the neighbouring districts. But fortune had definitely turned against England: in the next year he was slain and his army cut to pieces at the bloody battle of Castillon (July, 1453). Bordeaux held out for three months more, but was forced to yield to starvation before the year was out.

Thus was lost the last remnant of the great inheritance of Eleanor of Aquitaine, after it had remained just 300 years in the hands of the Plantagenets (1154-1453). England now retained none of her old possessions beyond sea save Calais and the Channel Islands, a strange surviving fragment of the duchy of Normandy.

The house of Lancaster and the English nation had sinned in company when they embarked so eagerly in 1415 on the wanton invasion of France. They had already paid for their crime by lavish expenditure of life and treasure on foreign battle-fields: they were now to incur the worse penalty of a savage and murderous civil war.

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE WARS OF THE ROSES.

1454-1471.

IN mediæval England there was but one way of getting rid of political grievances which the king refused to redress—the old method of armed force, the means which we have seen used in the cases of Gaveston, the Despensers, and the favourites of Richard II. Henry VI. was not idle and vicious like Edward the Second, nor did he yearn for autocratic power like the second Richard. He was merely a simple, feeble, well-intentioned young man, who always required some prop to lean upon, who chose his servants unwisely, and adhered to them obstinately.

A wise king would have dismissed Somerset after the disasters in Normandy and Guienne, and taken a more profitable helper in the hard task of governing England. York was the obvious man to choose ; he was an able general, and the first prince of the blood. But Henry distrusted York, and Henry's young queen viewed him with keen and unconcealed dislike. The thought that, if any harm should come to her husband, Duke Richard must succeed him, filled Margaret of Anjou with wrath and bitterness.

There are no signs that York yet entertained any disloyal designs on the throne, but he undoubtedly knew that, as the heir of the house of Mortimer, he owned a better hereditary claim to the throne than any member of the line of Lancaster. He was contented, however, to bide his time and wait for the succession of the childless king.

Meanwhile he took care to keep his party together, and steadfastly persevered in his very justifiable desire to evict the

Policy of the
Duke of York.

incapable Somerset from office. But it was the misfortune of England that Somerset was not friendless and unsupported, as Gaveston or the Despensers had been. He was the chief of a considerable family combination among the nobility, who were ready to aid him in keeping his place. There were, too, many others who disapproved of him personally, but were prepared to support him, some out of sheer loyalty to King Henry, some because they had old personal or family grudges against York or York's chief friends and supporters.

The chief misfortunes of the unhappy time that was now to set in, had their source in the swollen importance of the great noble houses, and the bitterness of their feuds with each other. For the last hundred years the landed wealth of England had been concentrating into fewer and fewer hands. The House of Lords contained less than a third of the numbers that it had shown in the days of Edward I. The greater peers had piled up such vast masses of estates that they were growing to be each a little king in his own district. The weak government of Henry VI. had allowed their insolence to come to a head, and for the last twenty years private wars between them had been growing more and more frequent. They found the tools of their turbulence in the hordes of disbanded soldiers sent home from France, who knew no other trade but fighting, and would sell themselves to be the household bullies of the highest bidder.

England was already honeycombed with family feuds, now ready to burst out into open violence. If we examine the lists of the supporters of York and of Somerset, we find that to a very large extent the politics of the English magnates were personal, and not national. With York were linked a great group of peers who were allied to him by blood. The chief of them were the younger branch of the Nevilles, represented by the two Earls of Salisbury and Warwick, a father and son who had each made his fortune by marrying the heiress of a great earldom. The Nevilles of the elder line, represented by the head of the house, the Earl of Westmoreland, had always been at feud with their cousins of the younger stock, and, since they were strong Lancastrians, the younger branch would probably have favoured York in any case. But their adhesion to him

Power of the nobility
The rival factions.—The Yorkists.

was rendered certain by the fact that Duke Richard had married Salisbury's sister. Another sister of the earl's was wedded to the next greatest supporter of York, John Mowbray, Duke of Norfolk. He was a nephew of that Mowbray whom Henry IV. had beheaded in 1405, in company with Archbishop Scrope, and so had his private grudge against the house of Lancaster. Among the other chiefs of the Yorkist party we can trace in almost every instance an old feud or a family alliance which seems to have determined their policy.

It was the same with the party that stood by the king and Somerset. It comprised, first of all, the houses which were allied in blood to the Lancastrian line—the king's cousins the Beauforts, the legitimized descendants of John of Gaunt, and his half-brothers Edmund and Jasper Tudor, Earls of Richmond and Pembroke.* After them came the Percies of Northumberland, the Westmoreland Nevilles, and the Staffords of Buckingham—the three houses which had been prominent in aiding the usurpation of Henry IV. The Earls of Northumberland and Westmoreland were certainly confirmed in their loyalty to the king by their bitter quarrel with their kinsmen, the younger Nevilles, the strongest supporters of York.

*The Lancas-
trians.*

But the "Wars of the Roses,"—as historians have chosen to name them, from the white rose which was the badge of York, and the red rose which was assumed long after as the emblem of Lancaster—were much more than a faction fight between two rival coteries of peers. At the first they were the attempt of the majority of the English nation to oust an unpopular minister from power by force of arms. There is no doubt that the greater part of England sided with York in this endeavour. The citizens and freeholders of London, Kent, the South, and the Midlands, where lay all the wealth and political energy of the nation, were strongly Yorkist. Henry, on the other hand, got his support from a group of great nobles who controlled the wild West and North, and the still wilder Wales.

*Character of
the Wars of
the Roses.*

Unfortunately for the nation, the constitutional aspect of the struggle was gradually obscured by the increasing bitterness

* The sons of Catherine of France, the widow of Henry V., by her second marriage with a Welsh knight named Owen Tudor.

of family blood-feuds. "Thy father slew mine, and now will I slay thee," was the cry of the Lancastrian noble to the enemy who asked for quarter,* and it expresses well enough the whole aspect of the later years of the struggle. The war commenced with an attempt to set right by force the government of the realm, but it ended as a mere series of bloody reprisals for slain kinsfolk. It left England in a far worse state, from the political and constitutional point of view, than it had known since the days of John. It began with the comparatively small affliction of a weak, well-intentioned king, who persisted in retaining an unpopular minister in power; it ended by leaving the realm in the hands of an arbitrary self-willed king, who ruled autocratically for himself, with no desire or intention of consulting the nation's wishes as to how it should be governed.

We might place the beginning of the Wars of the Roses at the moment of Cade's insurrection, but it was not till five years later that the struggle broke out in its bitterer form.

Strangely enough, the commencement of the strife was preceded by a time in which it seemed almost certain that the troubles of the realm would blow over. In 1453 **Madness of the king.—Birth of his son.** the king went mad; the peers and commons unanimously called upon York, as the first prince of the blood, to take up the place of Protector of the realm. He did so to the general satisfaction of the nation, cast Somerset into the Tower, and replaced the old ministers by more capable men. But just as all seemed settled, and York's ultimate succession to the crown appeared inevitable, the whole aspect of affairs was altered by the queen giving birth to a son, after nine years of unfruitful wedlock. This completely cut away York's prospect of succession; but he accepted the situation with loyalty, and swore allegiance to the infant Prince of Wales. But after eighteen months, Henry VI. suddenly and unexpectedly recovered his sanity. At once, at Queen Margaret's behest, he dismissed York and his friends from office, and drew Somerset out of the Tower to make him minister once more.

This action drove Duke Richard to sudden violence. He hastily gathered his retainers from the Welsh Marches, called his kinsmen the two Neville earls to his aid, and marched

* See p. 251.

on London. Somerset and the king had only the time to collect a few of their friends, when York came upon them at St. Albans. He laid before the king his ultimatum, requiring that Somerset should be given up to be tried, and, when it was rejected, attacked the town, in which the royal troops had barricaded themselves. After a short skirmish, the young Earl of Warwick, Richard Neville, burst his way into the streets and won the day for his uncle Duke Richard. The king was taken prisoner, while Somerset, the cause of all the trouble, was slain in the fray with several other lords of his party (May, 1455).

Outbreak of
war.—First
battle of St.
Albans.

The first battle of St. Albans put the control of the king's person into the hands of York, who again assumed the management of the realm. But he only kept it for less than a year; in 1456 the king asserted his constitutional power of changing his ministers, and turned Duke Richard's friends out of office. As his foe Somerset was now dead, York was fairly contented to leave matters in the king's own control. But after the blood shed at St. Albans, there could be no true reconciliation between the friends of the king and the friends of York. The fierce and active young Queen Margaret put herself at the head of the party which Suffolk and Somerset had formerly led. She feared for her infant son's right of succession to the throne, and was determined to crush York to make his path clear. Throughout the years 1457-8, while a precarious peace was still preserved, Margaret was journeying up and down the land, enlisting partisans in her cause, and giving them her son's badge of the white swan to wear, in token of promised fidelity.

The inevitable renewal of the war came in 1459. Its immediate cause was an attempt by some of the Queen's retainers to slay the young Earl of Warwick, York's ablest and most energetic supporter. Then Salisbury, Warwick's father, raised his Yorkshire tenants in arms; the queen sent against them a force under Lord Audley, whom the elder Neville defeated and slew at Blore-heath. After this skirmish, all England flew to arms to aid one party or the other. York, Salisbury, and Warwick met at Ludlow, on the Welsh border, while the king gathered a great army at Worcester, taking the field himself, with a vigour which he never before or afterwards displayed. It seems that York's

Renewal of the
war.—Rout of
Ludford.

adherents were moved by the vehement appeals which King Henry made to their loyalty, and cowed by the superior forces that he mustered. At the Rout of Ludford they broke up without fighting, leaving their leaders to escape as best they might. York fled to Ireland, Salisbury and Warwick to Calais, of which the younger Neville was governor.

But surprising and sudden vicissitudes of fortune were the order of the day all through the Wars of the Roses. The queen and her friends ruled harshly and unwisely after they had driven York out of the land. They assembled a Parliament at Coventry, which dealt out hard measures of attainder and confiscation against all who had favoured Duke Richard. They sacked the open town of Newbury because it was supposed to favour York, and hung seven citizens of London of the duke's party. These cruel actions turned the heart of the nation from the king and the ruthless Queen Margaret.

Harsh mea-
sures of the
queen.

Hearing of this state of affairs, Warwick and Salisbury suddenly made a descent from Calais, landed at Sandwich, and pushed boldly inland. The whole of Kent rose to join them, and they were able to march on London. The Yorkist partisans within the city were so strong that they threw open the gates, and the Nevilles seized the capital. The Londoners armed in their favour, and the Yorkist lords of the South flocked in to aid them; soon they were strong enough to strike at their enemies, whose forces were not yet concentrated. The queen had gathered at Northampton the loyalists of the Midland counties, but her friends of the North and West were not yet arrived.

Warwick, on July 10, 1460, stormed the entrenched camp of the Lancastrians in front of Northampton, and took the king prisoner. The queen escaped to Wales, but the greater part of the chiefs of her army were left dead on the field, for Warwick had bidden his men to spare the common folk, and slay none save knights and nobles. There fell the Duke of Buckingham, the Earl of Shrewsbury, and many other leading men of the king's party.

The Duke of York had crossed from Ireland too late to take any share in the fight of Northampton, but in time to reap the fruits of his nephew's victory. He advanced to London, and there summoned a Parliament. It then appeared that the

vicissitudes of the last year had so embittered him that he was no longer content to act as regent for Henry VI. He fell back on his undisputed hereditary claim as the eldest heir of Richard II., and began to talk of deposing his cousin and assuming the crown. But his own partisans set their faces against this plan, for Henry was still personally popular, and all the blame of his misgovernment was laid on the queen and her friends. The Earl of Warwick openly told his uncle that he must be content to be regent, and York had to accept a compromise, by which Henry VI. was to retain the crown as long as he lived, but to leave it to Duke Richard on his death. The rights of the little Prince of Wales were ignored, and many of the Yorkists swore that he was a supposititious child, and no true son of King Henry.

But in making this arrangement the duke's party had reckoned without Queen Margaret, who was still free and busy. She had fled to the North, and there had gathered to her the Percies, the elder Nevilles, and the barons of the Border, all staunch Lancastrians. Hearing of this muster, Duke Richard marched northward, with his second son Edmund, Earl of Rutland, and his brother-in-law, the Earl of Salisbury. He underrated the queen's forces, and rashly engaged with them under the walls of Sandal Castle, close to Wakefield. There, overwhelmed by numbers, he and his whole army were destroyed. Burning to avenge the slaughter of Northampton, the Lancastrians refused all quarter. The Earl of Rutland, a lad of seventeen, fell at the knees of Lord Clifford and asked for his life. "Thy father slew mine, and now will I slay thee," answered the rough Borderer, and stabbed him as he knelt. The Earl of Salisbury was captured and beheaded next day. Queen Margaret set the heads of the slain lords above the gate of York, Duke Richard's in the midst crowned in derision with a diadem of paper.

**Battle of
Wakefield.—
Slaughter of
Yorkist
leaders.**

Thus perished Richard of York, a man who had always displayed great abilities, and down to the last year of his life had shown much self-control and moderation. His death was a great loss to England, as the headship of his house and his party now passed to his son, a selfish and hard-hearted—though very able—young man of eighteen.

The event of the battle of Wakefield came as a thunderclap to

the Yorkists, who had hitherto despised the queen and her northern followers. Edward, Earl of March, **Second Battle of St. Albans.** Duke Richard's heir, was absent in the west, where he was striving with the Lancastrians of Wales. Only Richard of Warwick was in time to reach London before the northern army approached its walls. He rallied the Yorkists of the South, and led them to St. Albans, where Queen Margaret attacked him. Again the Northerners were victorious; they rescued King Henry from his captors, and scattered Warwick's army to the winds. The rancorous queen made her little seven-year old son sit in judgment on the prisoners, and bade him choose the form of death by which they each should die.

If Margaret had pushed on next day, the capital would have fallen into her hands; but her gentle and kindly spouse feared that the northern moss-troopers would sack and **London saved by Edward of York.** burn the city, and persuaded her to wait, in order that London might surrender in due form, and not be taken by assault. The short delay was fatal to him and his cause. While London was negotiating the terms on which it should yield, a new Yorkist army suddenly appeared on the scene.

Not many days before the second battle of St. Albans, the young Edward of York had routed the Lancastrians of Wales at the battle of Mortimer's Cross, in Herefordshire. He had then set out to march on London; on the way he was met by Warwick, who brought the news of his own defeat, and of the queen's approach to the capital. But, learning that she had not yet entered its walls, they marched night and day, and threw themselves into the city just as its gates were opening for surrender.

The arrival of the heir of York and his victorious troops turned the fortune of the war. Margaret's army had in great part dispersed to plunder the Midlands, for the **Retreat of the queen.** Northerners had vowed to treat every man south of the Trent as an enemy. When Duke Edward advanced they gave way before him, and retreated towards York, wasting the country behind them on all sides.

The slaughter of Wakefield and St. Albans, and more especially the ruthless execution of prisoners which had followed each battle, had driven the Yorkists to a pitch of anger which

they had not felt before. There was no longer any talk of making terms with Henry VI., and leaving him the crown. Warwick and the other nobles of his party besought the young duke to claim the crown, as the true heir of Richard II., and to stigmatize the three Lancastrian kings as usurpers. Edward readily consented, and proclaimed himself king at Westminster on his hereditary title, and without any form of election or assent of Parliament.

Edward pro-
claims himself
king.

But the new king had to fight for his crown before he could wear it. He and Warwick pursued the queen's army over the Trent, and caught it up at Towton, near Tadcaster, in Yorkshire. Here was fought the greatest and fiercest of the battles of the Wars of the Roses. Both parties were present in full force; the South and Midlands had rallied round Edward IV. in their wrath at the plundering of the Northumbrians. The Lancastrians of Wales and the Midlands had joined the queen during her retreat. The chroniclers assert that the two armies together mustered nearly a hundred thousand men—an impossible figure, but one which vouches for the fact that Towton saw the largest hosts set against each other that ever met on an English battle-field.

Battle of
Towton.

This desperate and bloody fight was waged on a bleak hill-side during a blinding snow-storm, which half hid the combatants from each other. It lasted for a whole March day from dawn to dusk, and ended in the complete rout of the queen's army. Thousands of the Lancastrians were crushed to death or drowned at the passing of the little river Cock, which lay behind their line of battle. There fell on the field the Earl of Northumberland, the Lords Clifford, Neville, Dacre, Welles, and Mauley—all the chiefs of the Lancastrian party in the north. Courtney, Earl of Devon, and Butler, Earl of Wilts, were captured, and beheaded some time after the fight. No less than forty-two men of knightly rank shared their fate, so savage were King Edward and Warwick in avenging their fathers and brothers who had died at Wakefield.

Slaughter of
Lancastrian
leaders.

Henry VI., with his wife and son, and the young Duke of Somerset, escaped from the field and fled into Scotland, where they were kindly received by the regents who ruled that land for the little King James III.

The carnage in and after Towton assured the crown to the house of York. Edward IV. was able to return to London and

Rule of Edward.— Warwick the King-maker. summon a Parliament, which formally acknowledged him as king, recognizing his hereditary right, and not going through any form of election. At his command they attainted the whole of the leaders of the Lancastrian party, both those who had fallen at Towton, and those who yet lived. Thinking his position sure, the young king then gave himself over to feasting and idleness, entrusting the completion of the war and the pacification of England to his cousin, the Earl of Warwick, whom men from this time forward called "the King-maker," because he had twice settled the fate of England, by winning the rule of the land for the house of York, at Northampton in 1460, and at Towton in 1461.

Edward IV. showed a strange mixture of qualities. On the battle-field he was a great commander, and in times of danger he was alert and dexterous. But when no perils were at hand, he became a reckless, heartless voluptuary, given to all manner of evil living and idle luxury, and letting affairs shift for themselves. For the first four years of his reign he handed over all cares of state to his cousin of Warwick, a busy capable man, who loved work and power, and strove not unsuccessfully to make himself the most popular man in England. Warwick called himself the friend of the commons, and used the vast wealth which he enjoyed as heir of all the broad lands of the Beauchamps, Nevilles, and Montacutes, to make himself partisans all over the country. He was self-confident and ambitious in the highest degree, and thoroughly enjoyed his position of chief minister to an idle and careless master. When he was at last deprived of it, we shall see that wounded pride could lead him to intrigue and treason.

The four years 1461-64 were occupied by the final crushing out of the civil war by the strong hand of the King-maker. The

Last efforts of the Lancastrians. task proved longer than might have been expected, owing to the desperate efforts which Queen Margaret made to maintain her son's cause. After Towton nothing remained to her but some castles in Northumberland and Wales, but she bought the aid of the Scots by ceding Berwick, and obtained men and money from Lewis XI.,

the young King of France. That astute prince thought that a weak and divided England was the best security for the safety of France, and doled out occasional help to the queen in consideration of a promise to surrender Calais.

Warwick captured all the Northumbrian strongholds of the house of Percy,—Bamborough, Alnwick, and Dunstanborough—in 1462. But the North was thoroughly disaffected to the new king, and they were twice retaken by treachery when the queen, with her French and Scottish friends, appeared before them. In her third campaign she was aided by a rising of all the Lancastrians who had submitted to King Edward and been pardoned by him, headed by the Duke of Somerset, the son of him who fell at St. Albans. But the two battles of Hedgeley Moor and Hexham (April—May, 1464) crushed the last desperate effort of the northern Lancastrians: at the former fell Sir Ralph Percy, the last chief of the Percy clan who clung to the lost cause; at the second the Duke of Somerset was taken and executed. Both fights were won by Lord Montagu, the younger brother and lieutenant of the great Earl of Warwick. By June, 1464, Warwick himself stamped out the last embers of resistance by the second capture of Bamborough, the sole surviving Lancastrian stronghold in England.

The King-maker returned in triumph to London, and could report to his master that he had completely pacified England, and had also concluded an advantageous treaty with the Scots. He proposed to finish his work by making terms with the King of France, the last supporter of the Lancastrian cause, with whom Margaret and her young son had sought refuge. For this purpose he advised King Edward to endeavour to ally himself with some princess among the kinswomen of Lewis XI.

It was from this point that the breach between Edward and his great minister began. When pressed to marry, the king announced—to the great surprise and annoyance of Warwick and the rest of his council—that he was married "already. He had secretly espoused Elizabeth, daughter of Richard Woodville, Lord Rivers, a staunch Lancastrian, and widow of Sir John Grey, another Lancastrian, who had fallen at St. Albans. She was some years older than Edward, and had a family by her first husband. But her beauty had captivated the susceptible young king, and he had married

Marriage of
Edward.

her in secret, in order to avoid the opposition of his family and his councillors.

When compelled to acknowledge this unwise match, Edward made the best of the matter, brought his wife to court, conferred an earldom on her father, and showered patronage upon her brothers and sisters. When Warwick and Edward ventured to remonstrate, he showed that he had no mind to be ruled any more by his too-powerful cousin, and redoubled his favours to the Woodvilles. He gave his wife's sisters as brides to the greatest peers of the realm, and made her father his Lord Treasurer. This was not pique, but policy, for Edward had come to the conclusion that the Neville clan was too strong, and had resolved to surround himself by another family connection which should owe everything to his protection (1465).

For a time an open breach between the king and the King-maker was delayed, and Edward's throne seemed firmly set. His position was made surer by the capture of the old King Henry VI., who was caught in Lancashire, where he had been lurking obscurely for some time. When Edward had placed him in the Tower of London, he thought that all his troubles were over. He forgot the unhealthy condition of the realm, the blood-feuds that reigned in every county, and the general disorganization of society that had resulted from six years of civil war and from the wholesale transference of lands and property that had accompanied it. Above all, he overlooked the vast power that had fallen into the hands of the great military peers, and especially of his ambitious cousin Warwick.

In 1467 Edward put his strength to the trial by dismissing all the King-maker's friends from office, and by ignominiously disavowing an embassy to France on which he had sent his cousin. From sheer desire to humiliate the great earl, he concluded an alliance with Charles the Rash, Duke of Burgundy, the deadly enemy of France, because he knew that Warwick was opposed to such a tie. He gave his sister Margaret to be the duke's wife, and made Warwick escort her on her embarkation for Flanders.

The earl replied by setting treasonable intrigues on foot. He leagued himself with the king's younger brother George, Duke of Clarence, Shakespeare's "false, fleeting, perjured Clarence."

a discontented young man of a very unamiable character. Warwick agreed to give his eldest daughter, the heiress of his vast estates, to the duke, and they swore to compel Edward to drive away the Woodvilles, and rule only under their guidance.

**Conspiracy of
Warwick.**

Warwick and Clarence were completely successful in their plot. They secretly suborned a rebellion in Yorkshire, under Sir John Conyers, one of Warwick's relatives, who was aided by the Neville retainers, as well as by the discontented Lancastrians of the North. Conyers called himself "Robin of Redesdale," and gave himself out as the champion of the poor and the redresser of grievances—much as Cade had done fifteen years before. He beat the king's army at Edgecote Field, near Banbury, and then Warwick and Clarence appeared upon the scene and apprehended Edward at Olney. They beheaded Earl Rivers, the father of all the Woodvilles, and Herbert, Earl of Pembroke, the king's chief confidant. After keeping Edward some months in durance, they released him, on his undertaking to govern according to their desires (1469).

**Defeat and
capture of
Edward.**

But the spirit of Edward always rose in times of trouble; he cast off his sloth, and plotted against the plotters. Taking advantage of an ill-planned Lancastrian rising in Lincolnshire, he raised a great army, and suddenly turned it against his disloyal brother and cousin. Warwick and Clarence were chased all across England, from Manchester to Dartmouth, and barely escaped with their lives by taking ship to France.

**Warwick
driven from
England.**

Furious at his failure, the King-maker resolved to sacrifice all his prejudices and predispositions to revenge. He met the exiled Queen Margaret at Angers, and proposed to her to restore Henry VI. to the throne, and make an end of the ungrateful Edward. After long doubting, Margaret resolved to take his offer, though she hated him bitterly, and never trusted him. To bind the alliance, Edward, Prince of Wales, the queen's young son, was married to Anne Neville, the earl's second daughter.

**He joins the
Lancastrians.**

Then Warwick and Margaret joined to foment a rising in England. The numerous clan of the Nevilles were prepared to follow their chief, and the surviving Lancastrians were still

ready to risk themselves in a new plan of insurrection. In the autumn of 1470, Warwick and Clarence landed in Devonshire and raised the standard of the imprisoned Henry VI. Their success showed the deep roots of the earl's popularity, and the precarious nature of King Edward's power. Simultaneous risings broke out all over England, and Edward, betrayed by most of his supporters, had to take ship and fly to Flanders. Henry VI. was drawn from his dungeon, and was for a few months again King of England.

But one more change of fortune was yet to come. Edward IV. borrowed men and money from his brother-in-law, Charles of Burgundy, and boldly returned to England in the spring of 1471. He landed in Yorkshire, called his partisans about him, and marched on London.

Edward, when his mettle was up, was a captain of no mean ability. He completely out-generalled his enemy, and got between him and the capital. The Duke of Clarence, who had been entrusted with Warwick's western forces, betrayed his father-in-law, and joined his brother with the men whom he should have led to the earl's aid. London and the person of Henry VI. fell into King Edward's hands. Warwick came up too late, and had to fight the Yorkists at Barnet, a few miles north of the city. There he was completely defeated and slain, losing the battle mainly by the accident of a fog, which caused two divisions of his troops to attack one another. With Warwick fell his brother Lord Montagu, and most of the personal adherents on whom his power rested.

But Edward was not yet secure. On the very day of Barnet, Queen Margaret landed at Portsmouth to raise the Lancastrians of the South in Warwick's aid. Hearing of his fall, she turned westward, gathering up a considerable force of adherents as she fled. But Edward rapidly pursued her, and by dint of superior pace in marching, caught her up at Tewkesbury. The queen's army was intercepted, and penned up with its back to the Severn, then destitute of a bridge. Unable to fly, the Lancastrians had to turn, and fought a desperate battle outside Tewkesbury. But King Edward never suffered a defeat in all his days; his courage and skill carried all before it, and the queen's army was annihilated. Her young son Edward, Prince of Wales, was slain in the pursuit, though

Henry again
king.
Return of
Edward.—
Battle of
Barnet.

Battle of
Tewkesbury.—
End of the
war.

he cried for quarter to "his brother Clarence." The last Duke of Somerset, the Earl of Devon, and all the surviving Lancastrian magnates fell on the field, or were beheaded next day by the victor. Queen Margaret was taken prisoner and thrown into confinement.

On the death of Prince Edward, the old king Henry VI. was left the only survivor of the house of Lancaster. The ruthless heir of York resolved that he too should die, and on his return to London had the feeble and saintly prince murdered, by the hands of his young brother Richard, Duke of Gloucester (1471).

**Murder of
Henry.**

Thus ended the wars of the Roses, in the complete victory of York, and the extinction of the line of John of Gaunt, after it had sat for three generations on the English throne.

CHAPTER XIX.

THE FALL OF THE HOUSE OF YORK.

1471-1485.

ALL the males of the house of Lancaster had now fallen by the sword or the dagger, not only the last representatives of the elder and legitimate branch which had occupied the throne, but also the whole family of the Beauforts, the descendants of the natural sons of John of Gaunt, who had been legitimized by the grant of Richard II. Even in the female line there remained no one who showed any signs of disputing the claim of Edward IV. to the throne. The only descendants of John of Gaunt's first family who survived were the Kings of Spain and Portugal, who traced themselves back to John's eldest daughter ; while the Beauforts were represented by Lady Margaret Beaufort, daughter of that Duke of Somerset who had died in 1444, the elder brother of the man who lost Normandy and fell at St. Albans. The Lady Margaret had married Edmund Tudor, Earl of Richmond, the half-brother of Henry VI., and by him had a single child, Henry, now Earl of Richmond by his father's decease. In Henry the Beaufort line had its last representative, but he was but a boy of fourteen, and was over-sea in Brittany, whither his mother had sent him for safety, while she herself had wedded as her second spouse Lord Stanley, a peer of strong Yorkist proclivities.

Neither the distant Spaniards nor the boy Henry of Richmond were seriously thought of—even by themselves—as claimants to the English crown, and King Edward might for the rest of his life repose on the laurels of Tewkesbury and Barnet, and take his ease without troubling himself about further dynastic troubles.

He reigned for twelve years after his restoration in 1471, and did little that was noteworthy in that time. His love of ease gradually sapped all his energy; his life grew more and more extravagant and irregular, as he sank into all the grosser forms of self-indulgence. He completely ruined a handsome person and a robust constitution, and by the age of forty-two had declined into an unwieldy and bloated invalid.

Edward's rule was not so bad for England as might have been expected from his very unamiable character. His second reign was comparatively free from bloodshed—if we except one dreadful crime committed on the person of his own brother. Perhaps he deserves little praise on this score, for both the Lancastrians and the partisans of Warwick had been practically exterminated by the slaughters of 1471. It is more to his credit that he bore lightly on the nation in the matter of taxation. His pockets were full of the plunder of the house of Neville and the old Lancastrian families, and, though self-indulgent, he was not a spendthrift. Indeed, he lived within his means, and seldom asked for a subsidy from Parliament. This moderation, however, does not imply that he was a constitutional sovereign. He ruled through a small clique of ministers and personal dependents, mostly members of his wife's family. He disliked parliamentary control so much that he seldom summoned a Parliament at all. For one whole period of five years (1478–82), he was rich enough to be able to refrain from calling one together. When he did want money, however, he did not shrink from raising it in the most objectionable manner, by compelling rich men to pay him forced loans, called "benevolences." It is fair to add that he generally paid his debts, and only owed £13,000 when he died. On the whole it may be said that his rule, though selfish and autocratic, was not oppressive. He gave the land peace in his later years, and any kind of quiet was an intense relief after the anarchy of the Wars of the Roses.

Commerce and industry began slowly to rally, and the wealth of the land seems to have suffered less than might have been expected. The bloodshed and confiscations of the unhappy years between 1455 and 1471 had fallen almost entirely on the nobles and their military retainers, and the cities and the yeomen had fared comparatively well. England

Parliament
rarely sum-
moned.—Be-
nevolences.

Revival of
industry.

had never been left desolate like France at the end of the Hundred Years' War.

Edward's foreign policy was feeble and uncertain. At first, after his restoration, he intended to attack France in alliance with his brother-in-law, Charles the Rash of Burgundy, who had given him shelter and succour during his day of exile. He raised an army and crossed the Channel, talking of recovering Normandy, and of asserting his right to the French crown. But Lewis XI., the wily King of France, offered to buy him off, proffering him a great sum down and an annual subsidy, if he would abandon the cause of Duke Charles. Edward was selfish and ungrateful enough to accept the offer with delight. He met King Lewis in a formal interview at Picquigny, in Picardy, and bargained to retire and remain neutral for 75,000 gold crowns paid down, and an annuity of 50,000 more so long as he lived. He also wrung a second 50,000 out of Lewis as a ransom for the unfortunate Queen Margaret of Anjou, a prisoner since the day of Tewkesbury, and stipulated that the Dauphin was to be married to his eldest daughter, the Princess Elizabeth (1475).

Edward came home with money in his purse, and found that the French annuity, which was punctually paid him, was most useful in enabling him to avoid having to call Parliaments. His betrayal of Charles of Burgundy was deeply resented by that prince, but Edward took no heed, and the duke was slain not long after, while waging war on the Swiss and the Duke of Lorraine.

Two years after the treaty of Picquigny occurred a tragedy which showed that Edward could still on occasion burst out into his old fits of cruelty. His brother George, Duke

Death of the
Duke of
Clarence.

of Clarence, had been received back into his favour after betraying Warwick in 1471, and had been granted half the King-maker's estates as the portion of his wife, Isabel Neville. But Clarence presumed on his pardon, and seems to have thought that all his treachery to his brother in 1468-70 had been forgotten as well as forgiven. He was always a turbulent, unwise, and reckless young man, and provoked the king by his insolent sayings and open disobedience. Edward had twice to interfere with him, once for illegally seizing, and causing to be executed, a lady whom he accused of bewitching

his wife Isabel, who died in childbirth ; a second time for trying to wed without his brother's leave Mary of Burgundy, the heiress of Charles the Rash. When Clarence was again detected in intrigues with a foreign power—this time with Scotland—the king resolved to make an end of him. Suddenly summoning a Parliament, he appeared before it, and accused his brother of treason, though he gave no clear or definite account of Clarence's misdeeds. Awed by Edward's wrath and vehemence, the two houses passed a bill declaring the duke convicted of high treason. The king then condemned him, cast him into the Tower, and there had him secretly slain (1478).

Edward for the future placed all his confidence in his youngest brother, Richard, Duke of Gloucester, who had served him faithfully all his life, had fled with him to Flanders in 1470, and had fought gallantly at Barnet and Tewkesbury. Gloucester had always been at odds with Clarence. He had married Anne Neville, the King-maker's younger daughter, widow of Edward Prince of Wales, who fell at Tewkesbury. In her right he claimed half the Neville lands, but Clarence had endeavoured to keep them from him, and had only been compelled to disgorge them under the king's stringent pressure. After 1478, Gloucester acted as his brother's chief councillor and representative, and showed himself a very capable and zealous servant

It was Gloucester who was entrusted with the conduct of a campaign against Scotland, which was undertaken in 1482, and was the last important event of Edward's reign. This was a war not at all creditable to Edward, who intrigued with the rebellious brothers of James III., and picked a quarrel with the Scots on frivolous grounds. His real object was the recovery of Berwick, which had been in Scottish hands since Queen Margaret surrendered it in the year of Towton. Gloucester took Berwick, which after being lost for twenty years again became an English town. He also harried the Merse and Lothian, the Scots retiring before him without a battle. Soon after they made peace, ceding Berwick, and promising that their king's eldest son should marry Edward's daughter Cecily.

In the year following this treaty the king died, worn out in early middle age by his evil living and intemperance. He left

Richard, Duke of Gloucester.

**Scottish war.—
Recovery of
Berwick.**

a large family—two sons, Edward aged twelve and Richard aged nine, and five daughters, of whom Elizabeth, the eldest, had reached her eighteenth year.

The decease of Edward, though he was little regretted for himself, threw the nation into great fear and perplexity, for it was confronted with the dangerous problem of a minority, and no one knew who would succeed in grasping power as regent for the little king Edward V. It was almost inevitable that there should be a struggle for the post, for the late king's court had contained elements which were jealous of each other, and had only been kept from collision by Edward's personal influence.

There were two persons to whom the regency might have fallen—the queen-dowager, Elizabeth Woodville, and the late king's brother, Richard of Gloucester. Elizabeth's ascendency implied that England would be ruled by her brothers and the sons of her first marriage—the lords Rivers and Dorset, Sir John Grey, and Sir Edward Woodville, all uncles or half-brothers to the little Edward V. Their rule would mean the banishment or suppression of Gloucester, with whom they were already at secret feud. In the same way, the rise of Gloucester to power would certainly mean a like fall for the Woodville clan.

At the moment of his accession the young king was in Shropshire, in charge of his uncle, Earl Rivers, a fact which put the queen's party at a great advantage. Rivers at once proceeded to bring his little nephew toward London, for his coronation, guarding him with a considerable armed force. On their way Edward and his cavalcade were encountered at Stony Stratford by Richard of Gloucester, who had also brought with him a considerable body of retainers from his Yorkshire estates.

The two parties met with profuse protestations of mutual friendship and esteem, but when Rivers' suspicions were lulled to sleep, Gloucester suddenly seized him, flung him into fetters, and sent him a prisoner to the north. Rivers' fate was shared by Sir Richard Grey, the little king's half-brother, and several more of their party.

Gloucester then took charge of his nephew's person, and brought him up to London, where he summoned a Parliament to

meet. The queen - dowager, on hearing that her brother Rivers and her son Richard Grey were cast into prison, knew that her chance of power was gone, and hastily took sanctuary at Westminster, with her youngest son, the little Duke of York, and her five daughters.

Gloucester
takes charge of
the young
king.

The nation was not displeased to learn that the regency would fall into the hands of Duke Richard, who was known as a good soldier, and had served his brother very faithfully ; it much preferred him to the Queen and her relatives, who had a bad reputation for greed and arrogance. But it soon became evident that there was something more in the air than a mere transference of the regency. Gloucester not only filled all the places about the king with his own friends, but commenced to pack London with great bodies of armed men raised on his own estates, a precaution quite unnecessary when all his enemies were crushed. He also made the council of regency confer gifts of money, land, and offices, on a most unprecedented scale, upon his two chief confidants, Henry, Duke of Buckingham, and John, Lord Howard. They were evidently being bought for some secret purpose.

Schemes of
Gloucester.

Gloucester and his nephew the king had been in London more than a month, and the day of the young king's coronation was at hand, when suddenly Duke Richard showed his real intentions by a sharp and bloody stroke.

Execution of
Lord Hastings.

On the 13th of June the Privy Council was meeting in the Tower of London on business of no great importance, and the duke showed himself smooth and affable as was his wont. After a space he withdrew, but ere long returned with a changed countenance and an aspect of gloom and anger. "What shall be done," he suddenly asked, "to them that compass the destruction of me, being so near of blood to the king, and Protector of this realm?" He was answered by Lord Hastings, the late king's best friend, a man of great courage and experience, who had shared in the victories of Barnet and Tewkesbury, and had held the highest offices ever since. "They are worthy of death," said the unsuspecting baron, "whoever they may be." Then Gloucester burst out, "It is my brother's wife," and baring his left arm—which all men knew to be somewhat deformed since his earliest years—he cried, "Look what yonder sorceress and

Shore's wife and those who are of their council have done unto me with their witchcrafts." Hastings started at the mention of Shore's wife, for Jane Shore was his own mistress, and an accusation of witchcraft against her touched him nearly. "If they have so done, my lord," he faltered, "they are worthy of heinous punishment." "Answeredst thou me with *ifs*?" replied Duke Richard. "I tell thee they *have* done it, and that I will prove upon thy body, thou traitor." Then he smote upon the table, and armed men, whom he had posted without, rushed into the council chamber. Richard bade them seize Hastings, Lord Stanley, the Archbishop of York, and the Bishop of Ely, all firm and loyal friends of Edward IV.

Hastings was borne out to the court of the Tower and beheaded then and there; the others were placed in bonds. This sudden blow at the young king's most faithful adherents dismayed the whole city; but Gloucester hastened to give out that he had detected Hastings and his friends in a plot against his life, and, as he had hitherto been always esteemed a loyal and upright prince, his words were half believed.

Richard's real object was to free himself from men whom he knew to be faithful to the young king, and unlikely to join in the dark plot which he was hatching. He next
Gloucester gets possession of the Duke of York. went with a great armed following to Westminster, where lay the queen-dowager and her children. Surrounding the sanctuary with guards, and then threatening to break in if he was resisted, he sent Cardinal Bouchier, the aged Archbishop of Canterbury, to persuade Elizabeth to give up her young son, Richard of York. Half in terror, half persuaded by the smooth prelate, who pledged his word that no harm should befall the boy, the Queen placed him in Bouchier's hands. Richard at once sent him to join his brother in the Tower (June 16).

Having both his brother's sons in his power, and having crushed his brother's faithful friends, Richard now proceeded to show his real intent. He was aiming at the crown, and had been preparing to seize it from the moment that his brother died. This was the meaning of the gifts that he had been showering around, and of the masses of armed men that he had gathered.

On the 22nd of June he laid his purpose open. His chaplain,

Doctor Shaw, was set up to preach to the people at St. Paul's Cross a marvellous sermon, in which he argued that Richard was the rightful king, though both Edward IV. and Clarence, his two elder brothers, had left sons behind them. The Londoners were told to their great surprise that the late king's marriage with Elizabeth Woodville had been invalid. Not only had they been secretly and unlawfully married in an unconsecrated place, but Edward had been betrothed long before to Lady Eleanor Talbot, the daughter of the Earl of Shrewsbury. He had never been given any clerical dispensation from this bond, and therefore he was not free to wed, and his sons were bastards. As to Clarence, he had been attainted, and the blood of his heir was corrupted by his father's attainder.

The Londoners were astonished at this strange argument; they kept silence and so disappointed Gloucester, who had come to the sermon in hopes to meet an enthusiastic reception. But two days later, a stranger scene was enacted at the Guildhall: the Duke of Buckingham, Gloucester's chief confederate, summoned together the mayor and council of London, and, repeating all the arguments that Doctor Shaw had urged, bade them salute Richard as king. A few timid voices shouted approval, and then Buckingham declared that he recognized the assent and good-will of the people. Next day there met the Parliament which should have witnessed the coronation of Edward V. They were summoned to St. Paul's, where Buckingham presented to them a long document, setting forth the evil government of Edward IV., denouncing his sons as bastards, and ending with a petition to Richard of Gloucester to take upon him as his right the title and estate of king. The Lords and Commons yielded their silent assent, apparently without a word of discussion or argument, and Buckingham then led a deputation to Duke Richard, who, with much feigned reluctance, assented to the petition and declared himself king. The only excuse for this lamentable weakness shown by the Houses is that they were quite unprepared for the *coup d'état*, and were overawed by the thousands of men-at-arms in the livery of Gloucester and Buckingham, who packed every street.

So Richard was crowned with great pomp if with little rejoicing,

and thought that he had attained the summit of his desires. But his position was from the first radically unsound. He had seized the throne so easily because his antecedents had not prepared men for such sudden and unscrupulous action, so that there had been no time to organize any opposition to him. But the pious and modest duke had suddenly blossomed forth into a bloodthirsty tyrant. On the very day of his accession he had the unfortunate Rivers and Grey beheaded at Pontefract, and six weeks later he wrought a much darker deed.

After starting on a festal progress through the midlands, he sent back a secret mandate to London, authorizing the murder of his little nephews, Edward and Richard. They were smothered at dead of night in their prison in the Tower, and secretly buried by the assassins. Their graves were never discovered till 1674, when masons repairing the building came upon the bones of two young boys thrust away under a staircase. The murder took place between the 7th and 14th of August, 1483, but its manner and details were never certainly known.

The horror which the disappearance of the harmless, unoffending, young princes caused all over England, was far more dangerous to Richard than their survival could possibly have been. It turned away from him the hearts of all save the most callous and ruffianly of his supporters. Within two months of their death a dangerous rebellion had broken out. It was headed by Buckingham, the very man who had appeared with such shameful prominence at the time of Richard's usurpation. No one can say whether he was shocked by the murder, or whether he was merely discontented with the vast bribes that the new king had given him, and craved yet more. But we find him conspiring with the queen's surviving kindred, the wrecks of the Lancastrian party, and some faithful adherents of Edward IV., to overturn the usurper. They proposed to call over the Earl of Richmond, and to marry him to the princess Elizabeth, the eldest sister of the murdered princes, so blending the claims of Lancaster and York (October, 1483).

The insurrection broke out in a dozen different districts all over England, but it was foiled by King Richard's untiring energy

and great military talent. He smote down his enemies before they were able to unite, and caught Buckingham, who had been separated from the bulk of his fellow-conspirators by a sudden rising of the Severn. Defeat and death of Buckingham.

The duke was executed at Salisbury, with such of his party as were taken, but the majority escaped over-sea and joined the Earl of Richmond.

This was destined to be the last gleam of success that Richard was to see. The rest of his short reign (1483-85) was a period of unrelieved gloom. No protestations of his good-will to England, and no attempts, however honest, to introduce just and even-handed government, availed him aught. He summoned a Parliament in 1484, and caused it to pass several laws of excellent intention, but he was not able to observe them himself, much less to enforce them on others. After having with great solemnity abolished the custom of raising benevolences, or forced loans, such as his brother Edward IV. had loved, Richard was compelled by the emptiness of his treasury to have recourse to them again, in less than a twelvemonth after he had disavowed the practice.

Personal misfortunes came upon the king in a way which seemed to mark the judgment of Heaven. Less than a year after he had slain his nephews, his only son Edward, Prince of Wales, died suddenly in the flower of his boyhood (1484). Death of the king's wife and son. Eleven months later his wife, Queen Anne, the daughter of the King-maker, followed his son to the grave. His enemies accused him of having poisoned her, for all charges were possible against one who had proved himself so cruel and treacherous.

It is said that Richard thought for a moment, after his wife's death, of compelling his niece Elizabeth, Edward IV.'s eldest daughter, to marry him, in order to merge her claim to the crown in his own. But the mere rumour of the intention so shocked the people that all his own partisans urged him to disavow it, which he accordingly did. Being wifeless and childless, he nominated as his heir his nephew, John de la Pole, Earl of Lincoln, the son of his eldest sister.

Meanwhile the conspiracy which had failed to overthrow Richard in the autumn of 1483, was again gathering head. The Earl of Richmond had obtained loans of men and money from

France, and was only waiting for the news that his friends were ready, to make a second attempt on England. With **Renewal of the rebellion.** him were all the enemies of King Richard who had escaped death—Dorset, the son of Queen Elizabeth, Edward Woodville, Morton Bishop of Ely, and the few surviving Lancastrian exiles headed by the Earls of Pembroke and Oxford. They relied, not on their French soldiery, but on the secret allies who were to join them in England, and especially on Lord Stanley, the Earl of Richmond's father-in-law. That noble, though he had been arrested in company with the unfortunate Hastings, had been pardoned by King Richard, and entrusted by him with much power in Lancashire and Cheshire. Richard's court was honeycombed with treason : his own Attorney-General, Morgan of Kidwelly, kept Richmond informed of his plans and actions. Of all those about the king only a very few were really faithful to him.

Richard knew that treason was abroad, though he could not identify the traitors. He struck cruelly and harshly at all that he could reach ; his ferocity may be gauged from the fact that he actually hung a Wiltshire gentleman named Collingbourn for no more than a copy of verses. The unfortunate rhymester had scoffed at Richard's three favourites, Lord Lovel, Sir William Catesby, and Sir Richard Ratcliffe, in the lines—

“ The Cat, the Rat, and Lovel our Dog
Rule all England under a Hog.”

The Hog was Richard himself, whose favourite badge was a white boar.

In August, 1485, Henry of Richmond landed at Milford Haven, and was joined by many of the Welsh, among whom he was popular because of his own Welsh blood, that came **Richmond lands in Wales.** from his father, Edmund Tudor. Advancing into England, he met with aid from the Talbots of Shrewsbury and many other midland gentry. Lord Stanley gathered a considerable army in Lancashire and Cheshire, but did not openly join the earl, because his son, Lord Strange, was in the king's hands, and would have been slain if Richard had been certain of his father's treachery.

Advancing still further into the midlands, Henry met the king at Bosworth Field, near Leicester. Richard's army was twice the

size of that of the earl. He must have conquered if his men had fought honestly for him. But when the battle was joined, the Earl of Northumberland, who led one wing of Richard's host, drew aside and would not fight, and presently Lord Stanley appeared with his contingent and charged the king in flank. The Yorkists began to disperse and fly, for they fought with little heart for their cruel master. But Richard himself would not turn back, though his attendants brought him his horse and besought him to save himself. He plunged into the thick of the fray, cut his way to Richmond's banner, and was there slain, fighting desperately to the last. With him fell his most faithful adherent, John Lord Howard, whom he had made Duke of Norfolk, and a few more of his chief captains. His favourite, Sir William Catesby, was taken prisoner and executed when the battle was over.

Richard's crown, beaten off his helmet by hard blows, was found in a hawthorn bush, and placed on Richmond's head by Lord Stanley, who then saluted him as king by the name of Henry VII. The dead monarch's body was taken to Leicester, and exposed naked before the people, but ultimately given honourable burial in the church of the Grey Friars.

Thus ended the prince who had wrought so much evil, and won his way to power by such unscrupulous cunning and cruelty. He was only thirty-three when he was cut off. There have been worse kings in history, and had his title been good and his hands clean of the blood of his kinsmen, he might have filled the English throne not unworthily. But the consequences of his first fatal crime drove him deeper and deeper into wickedness, and he left a worse name behind him than any of his predecessors. The historians of the next generation drew his portrait even darker than he deserved, making him a hideous hunchback with a malignant distorted countenance. As a matter of fact, his deformity was only that his left arm was somewhat withered, and his left shoulder consequently lower than his right. His portraits show a face not unlike that of his brother Edward, but thinner and set in a nervous and joyless look of suspicion.

Battle of Bosworth Field.

Character of Richard III.

CHAPTER XX.

HENRY VII.

1485-1509.

HENRY TUDOR had the good fortune to appear upon the scene as the avenger of all wrongs, those of the injured heirs of York no less than those of the long-exiled partisans of Lancaster. His victory had been won by the aid of Yorkists like Stanley, Dorset, and Edward Woodville, no less than by that of Oxford, Pembroke, the Courtenays, the Talbots, and other old Lancastrian names. It had been settled, long before he started, that he should blend the claims of the two rival houses by marrying the Princess Elizabeth, the eldest child of Edward IV. Thus he was able to pose as the reconciler of parties, and the bringer-in of peace and quiet. He proved his moderation by abstaining from bloodshed; he spared all the prisoners of Bosworth save three alone, and though he caused a bill of attainder to be passed against King Richard's chief partisans, no more executions followed. Henry's wise view of the situation was set forth by a law which he caused one of his Parliaments to approve at a subsequent date, to the effect that no man should ever be accused of treason for supporting the king *de facto* against the king *de jure*.

It required all Henry's moderation and ability, however, to make firm his seat upon the throne. His title to it was very weak —only that of conquest in fact—for the legitimacy of the Beaufort line as representatives of John of Gaunt was more than doubtful. Henry refused to rest his claim to the crown merely on his marriage to Elizabeth of York; he would be no mere king-consort, and he deliberately put off the wedding until he had been crowned at

Title of Henry
VII. to the
throne.

Westminster, and had been saluted by Parliament as king in his own right. Having thus made his position clear, he married Elizabeth, six months after the day of Bosworth Field.

Henry Tudor was precisely the sovereign that England required to put an end to the general unrest and unruliness that were the legacy of the Wars of the Roses. He had Character of
Henry. not an amiable character; he was reserved and suspicious, a master of plot and intrigue, selfish in act and thought, prone to hoard money in and out of season, and ready to strike unmercifully when a stroke seemed necessary. But his brain ruled his passions, and from policy, if not from natural inclination, he was clement and slow to anger. He had some turn for art and letters, and was religious in his own self-centred way. His ministers were wisely chosen; the two chief of them, Bishops Morton and Foxe, were prudent and blameless men. If Empson and Dudley, his two financial advisers, were much hated by the people for their extortions, it was because their master bade them fill his coffers, and was content that they should bear the unpopularity which must otherwise have fallen on himself. He deliberately chose to have scapegoats, lest he should have to take the responsibility for the harsher side of his policy.

The earlier years of Henry's reign were much disturbed by petty rebellions, the last ground-swell of discontent and lawlessness which lingered on after the great tempest of Lovel's
rising. the Wars of the Roses had abated. Richard III. had left behind him a few devoted partisans who had resolved never to submit; the chief were John de la Pole, Earl of Lincoln, who had been declared heir to the throne by the late king, and Lord Lovel, the sole survivor of the three favourites who had "ruled all England under the Hog." They were bold reckless men, ready to risk all for ambition and revenge. Before Henry had been a year on the throne, Lovel secretly collected a band of desperate friends, and tried to kidnap him while he was visiting York. Foiled in this scheme, Lovel fled to Flanders, where he was sheltered by Margaret, Duchess of Burgundy, the widowed sister of King Edward IV. With her and with Lincoln he concerted a second plan of rebellion. They resolved to try to rouse the wrecks of the Yorkist party in the name of Edward of Clarence, the young son of the duke who

had been put to death in 1478, and the only male heir of the house of York. This prince was in King Henry's hands, safely kept in custody in the Tower of London. Till Lambert Simnel. they could liberate him they resolved to make an impostor assume his name and title. So they instructed a clever boy named Lambert Simnel, the son of an organ-maker at Oxford, to act the part of the young Clarence, reasoning that Henry would not dare to put the real prince to death, but would keep him alive in order to make the imposture clear, and so they could free the real Clarence if they succeeded, and dismiss the false one when he was no longer needed.

Ireland had always been friendly to the house of York, and there was no one there who knew the young prince or could detect his counterfeit. So Lambert Simnel was Battle of Stoke. first sent thither, to try the temper of the Irish, giving out that he had just escaped from the Tower. The Earl of Kildare and other prominent Anglo-Irish barons were wholly cozened by the young impostor, and saluted him as king. Four thousand men under Lord Thomas Fitzgerald were raised to aid him; Lincoln and Lovel joined him with 2000 veteran German mercenaries under a captain named Martin Schwartz. They crossed to England and landed in Lancashire, where a few desperate Yorkists joined them. Then advancing inland, they met King Henry at Stoke, near Newark. But their ill-compact army was routed, the Germans and Irish were cut to pieces, and Lincoln, Schwartz, and Fitzgerald all slain. Lovel escaped to his manor of Minster Lovel, in Oxfordshire, and lurked in a secret chamber, where he was starved to death in hiding. Lambert Simnel fell into the hands of the king, who treated him with contempt instead of slaying him. He lived many years after as a cook in the royal kitchen. The rebels in Ireland were pardoned on submission, for Henry was loth to stir up further troubles in that distressful country (1488).

Thinking perhaps to turn the attention of the nation from domestic troubles by the old expedient of a war with France, the French war.— king in the next year joined in a struggle which Brittany united to France. was raging in Brittany. Charles VIII., the son of Lewis XI., was trying to annex the duchy, whose heiress was a young girl, the Duchess Anne. Henry agreed to aid this ancient ally of England, and sent over troops

both to Brittany and to Calais. The war went not unprosperously at first, and the garrison of Calais won a considerable victory at Dixmude, in Flanders. But after a time the Bretons grew weary of the struggle, and the Duchess Anne surrendered herself to King Charles, and became his wife (1491). Thus the last of the great French feudal states was united to the crown. For the future the English could get no support from them, and as a consequence all English invasions of France in the ensuing age met with little good fortune. There was never again any chance of dismembering a divided France, such as that with which Edward III. and Henry V. had to deal. The king recognized his powerlessness, and gladly made peace with Charles VIII. on receiving a subsidy of 745,000 crowns, a better bargain than Edward IV. had made under similar circumstances at Picquigny (1492).

Henry was wise to make an early and profitable peace, for new troubles were brewing for him at home. News came from Ireland that a young man was secretly harboured at Cork, who gave himself out to be Richard of Perkin Warbeck. York, the younger of the two princes smothered in the Tower nine years before. When Henry ordered his arrest, he fled to Flanders and took refuge with Duchess Margaret, who at once recognized him as her true nephew, and gave him a royal reception and a safe refuge for two years. There is no doubt, however, that he was really Perkin Warbeck, the son of a citizen of Tournay, who had plunged very young into a life of adventure, and hoped to gain something by fishing in the troubled waters of English politics. By Margaret's help Perkin engaged in secret intrigues with the few Yorkists who yet survived in England. But King Henry traced out all his plots, and beheaded Lord Fitzwalter and Sir William Stanley, who had listened to his tempting. Stanley's case was a bad one: he had betrayed Richard III. at Bosworth—like his brother Lord Stanley—and had been lavishly rewarded by Henry VII., yet would not keep faithful to his new master because he was refused an earldom (1495).

Though his friends had been detected, the pretender persisted in venturing an attack on England. With 2000 men raised with money lent him by Duchess Margaret, he tried to land in Kent; but the Kentishmen rose and drove him off. He then sailed to

Ireland, where—like his predecessor Lambert Simnel—he met with some support. But hearing that James IV. of Scotland was on the brink of war with the English, he soon passed over to the Scottish court, where he was received with royal state. James IV. married him to his cousin, Lady Catherine Gordon, and placed him at the head of an expedition with which he was to try and raise rebellion in Yorkshire, where the supporters of the house of York were still supposed to be numerous. But when Perkin crossed the Border, not an Englishman would join him, and he was obliged to return ignominiously to Scotland. From thence the restless adventurer soon set out on a new quest.

The heavy taxation which King Henry raised from his subjects to pay for an army to resist the Scots had provoked much murmuring in some parts of England. Most of *Cornish rising.* all had it been resented in the remote shire of Cornwall, where the local discontent took the form of armed gatherings to resist the taxes. Flammock, a lawyer, and Michael Joseph, a farrier of Bodmin, two turbulent demagogues, put themselves at the head of the rioters, and persuaded them to march on London, there to expostulate with the king. Lord Audley, an unwise south-country baron, joined their company, and led them as far as Blackheath, close to the gates of London. From thence they sent the king messages, bidding him to dismiss his extortionate ministers, and remove his taxes. Henry was taken by surprise, as he had just sent off his army against the Scots, but he promptly recalled the expedition and gave battle to the Cornishmen. The fight of Blackheath ended in their complete discomfiture: Audley, Flammock, and Joseph were taken and executed, but the king let the rest go away unharmed, as mere deluded tools of their leaders (June, 1497).

Warbeck had heard of the rising of the Cornishmen, and thought that he discerned in it his best opportunity of making head against King Henry. He landed at White-sand Bay, but found that he was too late, as the insurgents had already been defeated and scattered. But he rallied around him the wrecks of their bands, and made an attack on Exeter. Being foiled by the stout resistance of the citizens, and hearing that the king was coming against him with a great host, the pretender suddenly lost heart, left his men in the

Failure of
Warbeck

lurch, and fled away to take sanctuary in the abbey of Beaulieu (August, 1497).

King Henry showed extraordinary moderation in dealing with the insurgents : he fined Cornwall heavily, but ordered no executions. He promised Warbeck his life if he would leave his sanctuary, and when the impostor gave himself up, he was merely placed in honourable custody in the Tower. He was only made to publish the confession of his fraud, and to give a full account of his real life and adventures. Perkin might have lived to old age, like Lambert Simnel, if he had been content to keep quiet. But he made two attempts to escape from England, which roused the king's wrath. On the second occasion he persuaded another State prisoner, Edward of Clarence, the true heir of York, to fly with him ; but they were detected, and the king, provoked at last, executed Warbeck, and made the unfortunate Prince Edward share his fate (1499). Perkin had merited his end, but it is impossible to pardon Henry's dealings with the unlucky heir of Clarence, who had been a prisoner ever since Richard III. sent him to the Tower sixteen years before. There is no doubt that Henry was glad of the excuse to lop off another branch from the stem of York. Noting this fact, the next heir of that line, Edmund de la Pole, brother of the Earl of Lincoln who fell at Stoke, wisely fled from England, lest his royal blood should be his ruin.

Warbeck and
the Earl of
Warwick exe-
cuted.

After Warbeck's failure, King Henry was for the future free from the danger of dynastic risings against the house of Tudor. He was able to develop his policy both at home and abroad without any further danger of insurrections. In domestic matters he strove very successfully to put an end to the turbulence which had been left behind from the times of the civil war. His chief weapon was legislation against "livery and maintenance," the evil custom by which a great lord gave his badge to his neighbours, and undertook to support them in their quarrels and lawsuits. This abuse of local influence was sternly suppressed, and no man, however great, was permitted to keep about him more than a limited number of liveried retainers. It is on record that Henry punished his oldest friend and supporter, the Earl of Oxford, for breaking this rule. On the occasion of a royal visit to his castle

Suppression of
livery and
maintenance.

of Hedingham, Oxford received the king at the head of many hundreds of his followers, all clad in the de Vere livery, and was promptly made to pay a heavy fine for his ostentation.

Henry established a special tribunal for dealing with the offences of men, whose power and influence might foil and divert

**The Star
Chamber
founded.**

the ordinary course of justice. This was the new and unconstitutional "Court of Star Chamber," a committee of trusted members of the Privy Council,

which met in a room at Westminster whose roof was decorated with a pattern of stars. The court was useful at the time, but grew to be a serious grievance in later days, because it stood over and above the ordinary law of the land, and was used to carry out any illegal punishment that the king might devise.

By these arbitrary means, Henry Tudor succeeded in taming the survivors of the baronage, and in reducing them to such a

**Reduction of
the surviving
barons.**

state of subjection to the crown as England had never before seen. Their spirit had already been broken by the endless slaughters and confiscations

of the Wars of the Roses, and the majority of them were well content to surrender the anarchical independence which they had enjoyed of late, in return for a quiet and undisturbed security for life and land. It is to be noticed that many of the oldest and most powerful houses had now disappeared. By the year 1500 there only survived of the older and greater peerages those of Northumberland, Westmoreland, Arundel, Buckingham, Devon, and Oxford, to which may be added the duchy of Norfolk, afterwards restored to the Howards by Henry VIII. If we find other ancient titles borne by men of the Tudor time, we must remember that the holders were not the heirs of the lines whose names they bore, and did not possess the vast estates that had made those titles all-important. The Warwicks or Somersets, the Suffolks or Herefords of the sixteenth century are the mere creatures of Tudor caprice.

A few words are necessary to explain the tiresome and difficult subject of the foreign policy of Henry VII. We have seen that

**Foreign policy
of Henry.**

his venture of war with France in 1491 proved unfortunate, and he never repeated it. For the

future he preferred to hoard money at home, rather than to lavish it on continental wars. But if he never fought again, he was always threatening to fight, winning what advantage he

could by the menace of joining one or other of the parties which then divided Europe. The main troubles of continental politics in his period were caused by the restless ambition of the Kings of France. Freed from the lingering wars with England which had previously been their bane, the French monarchs had turned southward, and were striving to conquer Italy. Charles VIII. and Lewis XII., the two contemporaries of King Henry, spent all their energy in the attempt to annex the kingdom of Naples and the duchy of Milan, to which they had some shadowy claim of succession. Their schemes called into the field the sovereigns whose position would have been imperilled by the French conquest of Italy—the Emperor, Maximilian of Austria, and Ferdinand and Isabella, the sovereigns of Aragon and Castile, whose marriage had created the united kingdom of Spain.

If the struggle had raged in Italy alone, Henry VII. might have viewed it with a philosophic indifference. But it also involved the Netherlands, the near neighbour of England, and the chief market for English trade. The Netherlands. The Netherlands were at this moment in the hands of Philip of Austria, the son of the emperor, for Maximilian had married Mary of Burgundy, the heiress of the great dukes who had ruled in the Low Countries, and Philip was their only son.* Henry wished to keep on good terms with his neighbours in Flanders, more especially because it was there that the Yorkist refugees found shelter. Not only had the dowager Duchess Margaret aided them from thence, but Maximilian, while acting as regent in the Netherlands for his young son Philip, had given Perkin Warbeck much assistance.

Henry's policy was rendered difficult by the incurable perverseness of the emperor and his son, the Duke Philip, but he managed to keep out of war with them, and even obtained from them the "Great Intercourse," a The "Great Intercourse." commercial treaty with the Low Countries which was of much use to England, as it provided for the free entry of English goods into Flanders, and of Flemish goods into England, and stipulated that the king and the duke should join together to put down piracy in the Narrow Seas. Some years later Henry was enabled to wring some further advantages out of Duke Philip, in a not very honourable way. The duke was

* See table on p. 287.

sailing to Spain, when his ship was driven into Weymouth by a storm. The king made him welcome and entertained him royally, but would not suffer him to depart till he had promised to surrender the Yorkist refugee, Edmund de la Pole,* who was then staying in Flanders, and to still further extend the terms of the "Great Intercourse" to the benefit of English merchants (1506).

With Ferdinand of Aragon, the astute and unscrupulous King of Spain, Henry was able to get on better terms than with his capricious neighbour in Flanders, since both were guided purely by self-interest. The two wily kings understood and respected each other, and resolved to ally themselves by a marriage. Accordingly Arthur, Prince of Wales, Henry's eldest son, was wedded to Catherine, the younger daughter of Ferdinand and Isabella. They were both mere children, and the prince died before he had reached the age of seventeen. But Ferdinand resolved that the alliance should not drop through, and the Princess Catherine was passed on to Henry, Arthur's younger brother and successor in the title of Prince of Wales. He was some years younger than his bride, and the marriage, as we shall presently see, was a most unhappy one. With his son's wife the English king received a large but unpunctually paid dowry.

King Henry's long diplomatic intrigues with Spain and the Emperor brought him no very great profit in the end. But it was otherwise with his dealings with his neighbours in the British Isles. After the defeat of Perkin Warbeck, he made an advantageous peace with James IV. of Scotland, who married his daughter Margaret, and became his firm ally. For the last ten years of his reign Scotland gave no trouble. The still more difficult task of pacifying Ireland was also carried out with considerable success. Henry dealt very gently with the Irish chiefs, in spite of the treasonable support that they had given both to Simnel and to Warbeck. His plan of ruling the country was to enlist in his favour the Earl of Kildare, the most powerful of the Irish barons, by making him Lord Deputy, and entrusting him with very full control over the rest. "All Ireland cannot rule the Earl of

* Seven years later, Henry VIII. executed this unhappy prisoner in cold blood, and for no new offence,

Kildare," it had been said ; but the king answered, " Then the Earl of Kildare shall rule all Ireland."

This policy was attended by a fair measure of success ; if turbulent himself, the earl at least put down all other riotous chiefs. Henry's reign was also notable in Ireland for the passing of *Poynings' Act* at the Parliament of Drogheda. This put the Irish legislature in strict subordination to England, by providing that all laws brought before it must previously receive the assent of the king and his English Privy Council (1495). Poynings' Act.

Henry Tudor died before his time in 1509, having not yet reached the age of fifty-four. He left behind him a land peaceful and orderly, a nobility tamed and reduced to obedience, and a treasury filled with £1,800,000 in hard cash—the best possible witness to his wisdom and ability, for no king of England had ever built up such a hoard before. If his aims had been selfish and his hand hard, he had at any rate given England "strong governance," and saved her from sinking into anarchy.

CHAPTER XXI.

HENRY VIII., AND THE BREACH WITH ROME.

1509-1536.

THE young king who succeeded to the cautious and politic Henry VII. was perhaps the most remarkable man who ever sat upon the English throne. He guided England through the epoch of change and unrest which lay between the middle ages and modern history, and his guidance was of such a peculiar and personal stamp that he left an indelible mark on the land for many succeeding generations. All Europe was transformed during his time, and that the transformation in England differed from that on the continent in almost every respect, was due to his own strange combination of qualities.

Henry's character was a very complex one, mingling qualities good and bad in strange confusion. In many things he showed the traits of his grandfather Edward IV., his selfishness, his love of display, his sensuality, his outbursts of ruthless cruelty. But Edward had been nothing more than a soldier and a man of pleasure; he had no love of work, no power to read the character of others. Henry VIII. was a student, a statesman, a deep plotter, a keen observer of other men. He chose his servants—or rather his tools—with a clear-headed sagacity which no king ever surpassed, and he could break them or fling them away when they became useless, with a coolness that was all his own. Love of power, love of work, love of pleasure, love of show and pomp, did not distract him the one from the other, but blended closely together into one complex impulse—the determination to have his own will in all things. Such a state of mind bespeaks the tyrant, and a tyrant Henry became; but a tyrant whose brain was as strong as his

will—who knew the possible from the impossible, who could discern how far it was safe to go, and could check himself on the edge of any dangerous precipice of foreign or internal politics. He kept, as it were, a finger on the nation's pulse, and could restrain himself for a space if ever it began to beat too excitably. He did his best to court popularity with the English by an affable bearing and a regard for their prejudices. He strove to make them look on him as the nation's representative, and to flatter them into believing that his resolves were really in accordance with their own will and interests. He represented to them not only law and order, but national feeling and national pride. It was this clever acting that made it possible for him to manipulate England according to his wishes. He appeared to take the people into his confidence, and they replied by believing his statements even when they were most unfounded and misleading. Thus it was that Henry was able to rule despotically for forty years without having a serious quarrel with his Parliament, and without being compelled to raise a standing army—the tool which all contemporary despots were forced to employ.

Henry VIII. was very young when he came to the throne—he had only reached the age of eighteen. His character was still undeveloped, though he was known to be both clever and active. All that the nation knew of him was that he was a bright, handsome youth, fond of horse and hound, but equally fond of his books and his lute. He had from the first an eye for popularity, and did all that he could to please the people by shows and pageants that forced him to dip deeply into his father's hoarded money.

Yet the first act of Henry's reign was ominous of future cruelty and ruthlessness. Knowing the unpopularity of his father's harsh and extortionate but faithful servants, Empson and Dudley, he cast them into prison, and had them attainted by Parliament on a preposterous charge of treason. They were well hated, and the people saw their heads fall with joy, not reflecting on the character of a king who could deliberately slay his father's councillors merely to win popular applause.

His popular qualities.
Executions of Empson and Dudley.

Henry retained most of his father's old ministers in office, but he instantly reversed his father's policy of non-intervention in the

wars of the continent. He had not long been seated on the throne when he joined the "Holy League," a confederacy formed against France by Pope Julius II., in which both those old intriguers, the Emperor Maximilian and King Ferdinand of Aragon, were already enlisted (1511). Henry might have left them to fight their own battles for the mastery of Italy and Flanders, but he was burning to assert his power in Europe and to win military distinction. His arms were fairly fortunate. A first attack on the south of France failed, but he met with considerable success in 1513, when he landed at Calais with 25,000 men, took the towns of Tournay and Térouanne, and routed the French army of the North at an engagement called "the Battle of the Spurs," from the haste with which the French knights urged their horses out of the fray. Finding his armies losing ground both in Italy and in Flanders, King Lewis XII. sought peace from Henry, and obtained it at the cheap price of paying 100,000 crowns, and marrying the Princess Mary, the young English monarch's favourite sister (1514). These easy terms were granted because Henry found that his two wily allies, Ferdinand and Maximilian, had no intention of helping him, and were bent purely on their own aggrandisement. The alliance with Lewis was not to have much duration, for within a year he was dead—killed, as the chroniclers assert, by the late hours and high living which his gay young English queen persuaded him to adopt. His widow soon dried her tears, and married Sir Charles Brandon, one of her brother's favourite companions, whom Henry, to grace the match, decorated with the ill-omened title of Duke of Suffolk, the spoil of the unhappy de la Poles. From this union sprang one who was to sit for a brief moment on the English throne.*

Ere the French treaty had been made, a short stirring episode of war had taken place on England's northern frontier. King James IV. of Scotland had certain border feuds to settle with the English, and thought he might best take his revenge while Henry and his army were overseas in Flanders. So he suddenly declared war, and crossed the Tweed into Northumberland.

Thomas Howard, Earl of Surrey, son of John of Norfolk, who

* Lady Jane Grey, granddaughter and heiress of Charles and Mary.

fell at Bosworth, was in charge of the Border at the time. He raised the levies of the northern counties, and Battle of
Flodden. marched to meet the Scots. By throwing himself between King James and his retreat on Scotland, he forced the enemy to fight. On Flodden Field, between the Till and the Tweed, the armies met and fought a fierce and doubtful battle which lasted far into the night. Though victorious on one wing, the Scots were beaten in the centre, and their king and most of his nobles fell in a desperate struggle around the royal banner. In the darkness the survivors of the struggle dispersed and fled home. The death of their warlike sovereign, and the slaughter which had thinned their fighting men, kept the Scots quiet for many a day. During the long and troublous minority of James V. King Henry need fear no danger from the north. As a reward for his victory, Surrey was restored to his father's dukedom of Norfolk (1513).

In these early years of his reign, King Henry had already taken as his chief minister the able statesman who was for twenty years to be the second personage in Wolsey. England. Thomas Wolsey, Dean of Lincoln, was the son of a butcher of Ipswich, who had sought advancement in the Church, the easiest career for an able man of low birth. He had served Foxe, Bishop of Winchester, one of Henry VII.'s chief advisers, and from his service passed into that of the king. He was an active, untiring man, with a great talent for work and organization of all sorts. Henry made him Bishop of Tournay, then Archbishop of York, and finally Chancellor. In this capacity he served for no less than fourteen years, and was the chosen instrument of all his master's schemes. His dignity was increased when, in 1515, the Pope made him a cardinal, and afterwards appointed him his legate in England—an office which seemed to trench overmuch on the authority of the Archbishop of Canterbury as head and primate of the English Church.

It suited King Henry to have a minister who could relieve him of much of the toil and drudgery of government, who did not fear responsibility, and who was entirely dependent on his master. As long as he was well served, and granted plenty of spare time for his pleasures and enjoyments, he allowed Wolsey a very free hand. The cardinal's head was somewhat turned by his elevation, and he indulged in a pomp and state such as

almost befitted a king, never moving about without a sumptuous train of attendants. This arrogance made him much disliked, especially by the old nobility ; but the king tolerated it with all the more ease because he preferred that his minister should be less popular than himself. It was always convenient to have some one on whom the blame of royal failures might be laid, and Wolsey, with his ostentation of power and pride, made an admirable shield for his master. Henry allowed him, therefore, the prominence in which his soul delighted, gave him his way in things indifferent, but was ready to check him sharply when he began to develop any tendency to act contrary to his own royal will.

In the earlier days of Wolsey's ministry, the face of Europe was profoundly changed by the deaths of the three old monarchs

Charles V. and who had been the contemporaries of Henry VII.

Francis I. Lewis XII. of France died in 1515, Ferdinand of Aragon in 1516, the Emperor Maximilian in 1519. The successors of these old diplomatists were two young men, each slightly junior to the young King of England. In France the reckless and warlike Francis I. succeeded his cousin Lewis XII. In Spain and in the dominions of the house of Hapsburg, Ferdinand and Maximilian were followed by their grandson, Charles V., the child of the emperor's son and the king's daughter. Charles, being already King of Spain, Duke of Burgundy, and Archduke of Austria, was elected Emperor by the Germans in succession to his grandfather Maximilian.

Now Francis of France and Charles of Austria were rivals from their youth, and their rivalry was the main source of trouble

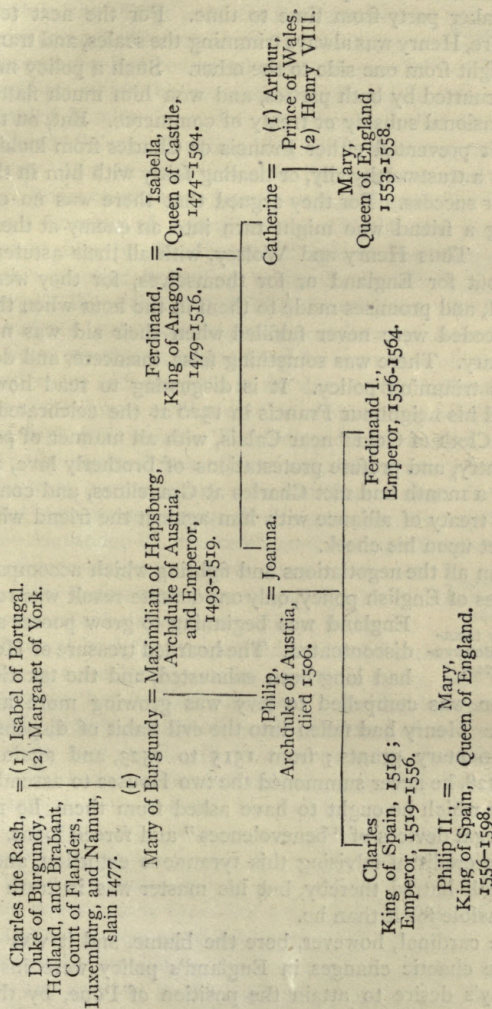
Policy of in European politics for a whole generation.

Henry. England had to choose between them when she sought an ally, but Henry found it by no means easy to make up his mind. France was his hereditary enemy, but, on the other hand, Charles, by uniting Spain, the Netherlands, and Austria, and acquiring in addition the position of Emperor, had built up such a vast power that he overshadowed Europe, and seemed dangerous by reason of his over-great dominions and wealth.

Henry and Wolsey, therefore, fell back on the idea that a balance of power in Europe was the best thing for England. It would

The balance of power. be a misfortune if either Francis I. or Charles V. should grow so powerful as to dominate the whole continent. England accordingly would do well to see that

THE KIN OF CHARLES V.



neither obtained complete success, and to make a rule of helping the weaker party from time to time. For the next ten years, therefore, Henry was always trimming the scales, and transferring his weight from one side to the other. Such a policy made him much courted by both parties, and won him much flattery, and an occasional subsidy or treaty of commerce. But, on the other hand, it prevented either Francis or Charles from looking upon him as a trustworthy ally, or dealing fairly with him in the hours of their success. For they argued that there was no object in serving a friend who might turn into an enemy at the shortest notice. Thus Henry and Wolsey, with all their astuteness, got no profit for England or for themselves, for they were never trusted, and promises made to them in the hour when their help was needed were never fulfilled when their aid was no longer necessary. There was something false, insincere, and degrading in this trimming policy. It is disgusting to read how Henry greeted his neighbour Francis in 1520 at the celebrated "Field of the Cloth of Gold" near Calais, with all manner of pomp and pageantry, and profuse protestations of brotherly love, and then within a month had met Charles at Gravelines, and concluded a secret treaty of alliance with him against the friend whose kiss was yet upon his cheek.

From all the negotiations and fighting which accompanied the changes of English policy, only one definite result was reached—

Heavy taxation.—Benevolences.

England was beginning to grow poorer and more discontented. The hoarded treasure of Henry VII. had long been exhausted, and the taxation which his son was compelled to levy was growing more and more heavy. Henry had fallen into the evil habit of dispensing with parliamentary grants; from 1515 to 1523, and again in 1527 and 1528, he never summoned the two Houses to assemble. The money which he ought to have asked from them, he raised by the illegal devices of "benevolences" and forced loans. Wolsey got the credit of advising this tyrannous extortion, and gained no small hatred thereby, but his master was in truth far more responsible for it than he.

The cardinal, however, bore the blame, and it was said that all the chaotic changes in England's policy were inspired by Wolsey's desire to attain the position of Pope, by the aid of whichever of the two powers of France and Austria had the

advantage for the moment. There is no doubt that there was some truth in the charge ; the cardinal's ambition was overweening, and he would gladly have become Pope, because he had conceived great schemes of Church reform which the possession of the papacy alone would have enabled him to carry out. It is certain that Charles V. twice deluded Wolsey into aiding him, by the tempting bait of the papal tiara. But on each occasion the Emperor used his influence at Rome to get some surer partisan elected.

Wolsey aims
at becoming
Pope.

Wolsey's scheme of reforming the Church was no doubt suggested to him by the discontent against the clergy which was at this moment beginning to break out all over Europe. Since the days of Wicliffe, religious matters had not been taking any very prominent place in English politics, but a storm was now at hand far more terrible than that which had swept over the land in the days of the Lollards. The condition of the church of Western Christendom had become more and more deplorable of late. The worst example was set at headquarters : bad as the Popes of the fourteenth century had been, those who were contemporary with the Tudors were far worse. Rome had seen in succession three scandalous Popes, the first of whom—Alexander VI., the celebrated Rodrigo Borgia—was a monster of depravity, a murderer given up to the practice of the foulest vices ; the second—Julius II.—was a mere secular statesman with no piety, but a decided talent both for intrigue and for hard fighting ; the third—Leo X.—was a cultured atheist, of artistic tastes, who used to tell his friends that " Christianity was a profitable superstition for Popes." Under such pontiffs all the abuses of the mediæval Church came to a head. Ill living, corruption, open impiety, reckless interference in secular politics, non-residence, neglect of all spiritual duties, greed for money, were more openly practised by the clergy than in any previous age. Even the better sort of ecclesiastics could see no harm in obvious abuses ; —Foxe, Bishop of Winchester, a man of great virtue, absented himself for twenty years from his see. Wolsey held three sees at once, and never went near any of them.

Condition of
the Church.

Depravity of
the Popes and
Clergy.

The lamentable state of the Church would have provoked murmuring in any age, but in the sixteenth century it led to open rebellion in all those countries of Europe which still retained

some regard for religion and morals. The revival of arts and letters, which men call the Renaissance, was now at its height, and Europe was for the first time full of educated laymen who could criticize the Church from outside, and compare its teaching with its practice. The multiplication of books, owing to the discovery of printing, had placed the means of knowledge in every man's hands, and the revived study of Hebrew and Greek was setting the learned to read the Scriptures in their original tongues. All the elements of a violent outbreak against the papacy, its superstitions and its enormities, were ready to combine.

In 1517 a German friar, Martin Luther, had first given voice to the universal discontent, by opposing the immoral practice of selling "indulgences," or papal letters remitting penances for sins, in return for money. He had followed this up by preaching against many other papal abuses, and, when Leo X. replied by excommunicating him, he began to attack the whole system of the mediæval Church—inveighing against the Pope's spiritual supremacy, the invocation of saints, the celibacy of the clergy, the adoption of the monastic life, and many other matters. He was supported by his prince, Frederick, Elector of Saxony, and a great part of Germany at once declared in his favour (1517-21).

England was not at first very much affected by the revolt of Germany against the papacy. The English Church was far less corrupt than those of France or Italy, and though full of abuses, was not really unpopular with the nation. It still retained much of the old national spirit, and was not the mere slave of the Pope. Neither king nor people showed any signs of following the lead of the Germans. Henry wrote a book to prove Luther's views heretical, and received in return from Leo X. the title of Defender of the Faith, which English sovereigns still display on their coinage. Wolsey devoted himself to practical reforms, leaving doctrine alone. His first measure was to suppress many small and decayed monasteries, and to build with their plunder his great foundation of Cardinal's College, afterwards known as Christ Church, in the University of Oxford.

It was not till about 1527 that England began to be drawn into the struggle which was convulsing all continental Europe,

and then the cause of quarrel came from the king's private affairs, and not from any doctrinal dispute. It will be remembered that Henry had been affianced by his father to Catherine of Aragon, the widow of his brother, Arthur Prince of Wales. Marriage with a deceased brother's wife being illegal, a papal dispensation had been procured to remove the bar, and Henry had married Catherine on his accession, so that he could not plead compulsion on the part of his father. The marriage was not a wise one, for the queen, though a very gentle and virtuous woman, was six years older than her husband, had no personal attractions, and was delicate in health. All the children whom she bore to Henry died in infancy—except one, the Princess Mary. By 1527 Catherine was a confirmed invalid, and showed all the signs of premature old age, though she was only forty-two.

Henry and
Queen
Catherine.

Now Henry VIII. was morbidly anxious for a son to succeed him ; he was the only surviving male of the house of Tudor, and could not bear the thought of leaving the throne to a sickly girl. It was obvious that Catherine would bear him no more children, and, regardless of the duty and respect that he owed to her, he began to think of obtaining a divorce, and marrying a younger wife. His project took a definite shape when his eye was caught by the beautiful Anne Boleyn, a niece of the Duke of Norfolk, and one of the maids of honour. Becoming desperately enamoured of her, he resolved to press for a divorce at once. Wolsey, who saw that the kingdom needed a male heir, undertook to procure the Pope's consent to the repudiation of Catherine.

Henry desires
a divorce.

But this task proved more difficult than he had expected. Popes were generally indulgent enough to kings who would pay handsomely for their heart's desire. But the reigning pontiff, Clement VII., was in an unhappy position : he was completely at the mercy of the Emperor Charles V., whose troops had lately taken and sacked Rome. Charles was resolved that his aunt Catherine should not be divorced, and Pope Clement was mortally afraid of offending him. Instead, therefore, of granting the demand of Henry VIII., he temporized, and appointed two cardinals, Wolsey himself and Campeggio, the Italian bishop of Salisbury, to investigate the question. Henry and Wolsey hoped to force on

Attitude of
the Pope.

a prompt decision : but Campeggio deliberately hung back, and the Pope finally recalled him, and summoned the king to send his case to be tried at Rome (1528). Henry wrongly thought that this check was due to some bungling or reluctance on the part of Wolsey, not seeing that the Pope's fears of the Emperor were the real cause.

He at once withdrew his support from the great minister, though Wolsey needed it more at this moment than ever before, **Unpopularity of Wolsey.** for he was in great disfavour with the nation, both for his arrogance and for the heavy taxation which he had imposed on the land. He had actually demanded from Parliament the unprecedented tax of 4s. in the pound on all men's lands and incomes, and, though the House plucked up courage to resist this extortionate claim, had obtained as much as 2s. In 1529 the cardinal, fearing to meet another Parliament, had recourse to the old device of benevolences, on a larger scale than ever. This led to rioting and open resistance. Then the king, to the surprise of all men, suddenly declared that Wolsey's action was taken without his knowledge and consent, and dismissed him from the office of Chancellor, which he had held since 1515.

His place as the king's chief counsellor fell to the Duke of Norfolk, the uncle of Anne Boleyn. The king immediately proceeded to treat the cardinal with great ingratitude. **His disgrace and death.** Wolsey's harsh deeds had always been wrought for his master's benefit rather than his own, but Henry chose to ignore this fact, and to win a cheap popularity by persecuting his old and faithful servant. Probably Anne Boleyn and her uncle Norfolk, exasperated by the delay in the king's divorce, stirred up Henry to the attack. The cardinal was impeached for having accepted the title of legate from Rome, without the king's formal leave, many years before. Henry had made no objection at the time, and it was pure hypocrisy to pretend indignation now. But Wolsey was declared to have incurred penalties under the Statute of Praemunire, which forbade dealings with Rome conducted without royal leave. He was condemned, deprived of all his enormous personal property, and sent away from court, to live in his archbishopric of York. A year later Henry again commenced to molest him, and he was on his way to London, to answer a preposterous charge of treason,

when he died at Leicester, as much of a broken heart as of any disease. He had been arrogant and harsh in his day of power, but had served his master so faithfully that nothing can excuse Henry's ingratitude. Unfortunately for England, he had taught the king the dangerous lesson that he could go very far in the direction of absolute and tyrannical government, and escape from the consequent unpopularity by throwing over his ministers. Henry used this knowledge to the full during the rest of his reign.

Meanwhile Wolsey's disgrace, and the complete failure of the attempt to win a divorce from the Pope, had been leading the king into new paths. He had taken to himself two Cromwell and Cranmer. new councillors. In secular matters he gave his confidence to Thomas Cromwell, a clever, low-born adventurer, whom Wolsey had discovered and brought to court. In matters religious he was beginning to listen to his chaplain, Thomas Cranmer, a man with a curious mixture of piety and weakness, one of the few Englishmen who had as yet been touched by the doctrines of the Continental Reformers. It was not, however, as a Reformer that Cranmer commended himself to his master ; indeed, he kept his Lutheran opinions very secret. But he had suggested to the king a new method of dealing with the divorce question, which Henry considered not unpromising. It might be urged that marriage with a deceased brother's wife was so strictly and definitely forbidden in the Scriptures, that the Pope had no authority to sanction it, and so the permissory bull of Julius II. might be scouted as so much waste paper. Henry eagerly swallowed the idea, and sent round the question, stated as a moot point, to all the universities of Europe. About half of them answered, as he wished, that the marriage was illegal from the first. Armed with this authority, he resolved to go further.

But first Henry was resolved to show the English clergy that he was determined to stand no opposition from them on this point. He opened a campaign against all manner Attack on the clergy. of Church abuses, with the object of winning for himself popularity with the nation, by the cheap expedient of a pretended zeal for purity and piety. He told the Convocation of the clergy that they had all made themselves liable to the penalties of *Praemunire*, for recognizing Wolsey as legate without the royal leave. They only got pardon by voting the king the

large fine of £118,000. He also caused Convocation to address him as "Supreme Head, as far as the law of Christ will allow, of the English Church and clergy," thus casting a slur on the Pope's universal authority. Convocation was also forced to submit to an Act of Parliament which swept away two ancient abuses, the right to claim "benefit of clergy" when accused of felony, and so to escape the king's justice, and the power of evading the Statute of Mortmain, by receiving legacies under trust instead of in full proprietorship. The Pope still proving recalcitrant in the matter of the divorce, Henry took the further step of threatening to cut off the main contribution which England sent to Rome—the *annates* or first-fruits, paid by all benefices when they changed hands.

This menace did not bring Clement VII. to reason, and Henry at last took the step which involved a fatal breach with Rome.

Henry divorces Catherine. He appointed the pliant Cranmer Archbishop of Canterbury, and bade him try the question of the divorce in an English ecclesiastical court, without any further application to Rome. Queen Catherine refused to appear before such a tribunal, and formally appealed to the Pope's justice. But Cranmer proceeded with the trial, declared the marriage contrary to the law of God, and pronounced the king free from all his ties and able to wed again. Even before the decision was announced, Henry had secretly married Anne Boleyn (January, 1533), and the moment that the court had given judgment he presented her to the nation as Queen of England. The unhappy Catherine retired into privacy at Kimbolton, where she survived nearly three years.

The Pope at once declared the new marriage illegal, and threatened Henry with an excommunication. Many good men were scandalized to see the king repudiate a wife who had lived as his faithful spouse for twenty years. **Final rupture with the Pope.** Murmurings and prophecies of ill filled the air, and Henry felt that trouble was brewing. But he only hardened his heart, and caused Parliament to pass a bill for cutting short the Pope's spiritual authority over England, unless he should acknowledge the validity of the new marriage within three months. Clement refused to be bullied into compliance, and the rupture came (1533).

Queen Anne soon bore the king a daughter, the famous Queen

Elizabeth, and Henry then ordered all his subjects to take an oath repudiating all obedience to papal orders, and acknowledging the child as rightful heiress of the realm, to the prejudice of his elder daughter Mary.

Act of Supremacy.—More and Fisher executed.

This oath many persons refused to take, since it openly disavowed the Pope's authority over the English Church. The chief of them were Sir Thomas More, a learned and virtuous statesman who had succeeded Wolsey as Chancellor, and Fisher, Bishop of Rochester. Henry cast them into prison, and soon after caused Parliament to pass the "Act of Supremacy," which declared him "Supreme Head of the Church of England," and pronounced any one who denied him this title guilty of high treason. Under this ferocious edict More and Fisher were beheaded, and many other minor personages suffered with them.

Pope Paul III., who had just succeeded to Pope Clement's tiara, now caused a Bull to be drawn up against his enemy (Dec. 15, 1535). He not only pronounced King Henry an excommunicated person, but declared him to be deposed from his throne. It was now war to the knife between the king and the papacy, and the rest of Henry's reign was to be taken up with the struggle. During the twelve years that he had still to live, he spent all his energies in severing every link that still bound England to Rome.

Henry excommunicated and deposed.

CHAPTER XXII.

THE ENGLISH REFORMATION.

1536-1553.

✓ THE breach between England and Rome had become irreparable when Henry executed More and Fisher, and when Pope Paul had declared the king deposed. The Church of England had now seceded from the Roman obedience, and organized herself as an independent body with the sovereign as her Supreme Head. The secession had been carried out entirely on the king's initiative, but the nation had acquiesced in it because of the old and long-felt abuses of which the papacy had always been the maintainer. King and people alike wished to make an end of the customs by which the Pope had profited,—his vast gains from the *annates* of English sees and benefices ; his habit of appointing non-resident Italians to the richest English preferments ; his power of summoning litigants on ecclesiastical matters before the distant, costly, and corrupt Church courts at Rome. It was generally thought that when England freed herself from the Roman obedience, she would be able to reform in peace all the faults and abuses which disfigured her ecclesiastical system. Further than this the majority of the nation did not at first wish to go ; they had not ceased to be Catholics, though they were no longer Roman Catholics. Only a comparatively small section of the English people had yet been affected by the later developments of Continental Protestantism.

But the conditions of the English and the Germans at the moment when both threw off the yoke of Rome, were sufficiently similar to make it inevitable that the theories of the German Protestantism. Continental Reformers would ere long begin to act upon English minds. The German protest against the papacy

had taken shape in the declaration that the Bible alone was the rule by which Christian men should order their lives—that the tradition of the mediæval Church, which supplemented the teaching of the Gospels, was dangerous, full of errors and superstitions, and often directly opposed to scriptural precept. Mediæval traditions were the bulwark of the Roman see, and ere long we find King Henry and his bishops following the Germans into this position, and basing the reform of the English Church on the Bible, and the Bible alone. But when tradition was rejected and the Scriptures taken as the sole test of all doctrines, further development became inevitable. There soon arose Reformers in England, as on the Continent, who could not find in their Bibles any justification for some of the doctrines to which King Henry clung most obstinately, and most of all for the dogma of Transubstantiation, round which the Roman Church had built up its main claim to rule the souls of men.

This doctrine concerning “the Sacrifice of the Mass,” as commonly held at this time in the Western Church, taught that, at the celebration of the Holy Communion, when the priest had consecrated the sacramental bread and wine, the very flesh and blood of Christ became carnally and corporeally present in the chalice and patten—that the bread and wine were no longer bread and wine, but had been transubstantiated into Christ’s own body, which was day by day offered up in sacrifice for the sins of the world. The Pope and the priesthood, by their power of granting or refusing the sacrament to the laity, stood as the sole mediators between God and man. The Continental Protestants, cut off from the main body of the Western Church by the Pope’s ban, had formulated theories which struck at the roots of the power of the clergy. Many of them treated the sacrament of the Lord’s Supper as no more than a solemn ceremony, denying any sacramental character to the rite. The majority of the early English Protestants fell into this extreme view.

Doctrine of
transubstan-
tiation.

Now Henry VIII. to the end of his days stood firm to the mediæval doctrine of the sacrament, and fully accepted Transubstantiation, though he denied the deduction which the Roman Church had drawn from it—that by it the Pope and clergy are the despotic masters of the souls of men. He merely desired to place himself in the position

Attitude of
the king.

which the Pope had hitherto held, as head of the spiritual hierarchy of England. With the pliant Cranmer and other bishops of his own to serve him, he wished to become as despotic a sovereign over the souls of Englishmen as he already was over their bodies. To a great extent he succeeded, and for the last twelve years of his reign he exercised a hateful spiritual tyranny over his subjects, drawing a hard-and-fast line of submission to his own views, which no man was allowed to overstep in either direction. Roman Catholics who denied his power to supersede the Pope's authority were hung as traitors. Protestants who refused to accept his theory of the Sacraments were burnt as heretics.

The turning-point of Henry's reign was the turbulent and boisterous year 1536-7. In pursuance of his plan of a campaign

The
monasteries. against the papacy, disguised under the shape of a reform of abuses, Henry had resolved to attack the monasteries. The monks had long been an unpopular class : the impulse towards monasticism, which had been so vigorous in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, had long died away, and ever since the time of Wicliffe men had been asking each other what was the use of the monasteries? There were no less than 619 of them in England. They were enormously wealthy, and they did little to justify their existence ; they had long ceased to be centres of learning or of teaching. Beyond going through their daily round of mechanical Church services, their inmates did absolutely nothing. Their wealth had led to much luxury, both of splendid building and of high living. To this day the traveller who measures the ruins of enormous and sumptuous abbeys planted in the wilderness—like Tintern or Fountains—and learns that they served no public or spiritual end save the sheltering of a few dozen monks, wonders at the magnificence or the husk which contained so small and withered a kernel. But the monasteries were worse than useless—they were absolutely harmful ; their worst habit was to acquire rich country livings, draw all the tithes from them, and work them with a vicar on starvation wages. If we see a poor living in modern England, we generally find that the monks sucked the marrow out of it in the Middle Ages, to rear their colossal chapels and their magnificent refectories. It was the monasteries, too, which by their indiscriminate doles and charities, reared and fostered the horde of

itinerant beggars who, under the name of pilgrims, tramped from abbey to abbey all the year round. Worse than this, there is no doubt that a considerable amount of evil living prevailed in some of the monasteries. Before the Reformation had been heard of, we find Archbishop Warham and Cardinal Wolsey storming at the immorality of certain religious houses. It was but natural that idleness, luxury, and high living should breed such results among the grosser souls in the monastic corporations. In public esteem the better houses suffered for the sins of the worse.

The monks had always been the faithful allies of the Popes, and Henry determined to suppress this "papal militia," as they have been called, and at the same time to fill his pockets from their plunder. Accordingly, he sent Inquiry into their condition. commissioners round England, to report on the state of the religious houses. These officials—as the king had wished—drew up a very gloomy report. They declared that they found nothing but idleness and corruption among the smaller monasteries, and that many of the greater were no better. There can be no doubt that they grossly exaggerated the blackness of the picture, knowing that the king would welcome all possible justification for the action which he was meditating. But it is equally certain that in most parts of England the monks were deservedly unpopular, and that the commissioners' report only reflected the nation's belief.

Henry laid the report before his Parliament, and at his suggestion an act was passed suppressing the lesser monasteries—all such as had an income of less than £200 The lesser monasteries suppressed. per annum. Their goods were confiscated to the Crown, but an allowance was made to such of the monks as did not find places in the surviving monasteries of the larger sort (1536).

The year of the dissolution of small monasteries was notable for a tragedy in the palace, which shows Henry's unlovely character at its worst. He had been growing cold Henry and Anne Boleyn. to the fair and ambitious queen who had brought on him his quarrel with Rome. She had disappointed his hope of a male heir—only the Princess Elizabeth had sprung from the marriage. Henry had tired of her voluptuous airs and graces, and was beginning to feel vexed at the want of dignity and decorum which she displayed among his courtiers. Anne's

light words and unseemly familiarity with many of the gentlemen of his household roused his anger. But what was most fatal to the unfortunate queen was that his eye had caught another face about the court, which now seemed to him more attractive than his wife's.

Suddenly and unexpectedly the storm burst. On May 2, 1536, the king sent Anne to the Tower, and charged her with misconduct with several members of his household. Anne's execution.—Marriage with Jane Seymour. Protesting her innocence and amazement to the last, the unhappy young wife was tried, condemned, and executed, within a space of less than three weeks from her arrest. Her own father and uncle sat on the bench of peers which declared her an adulteress ; but the fact witnesses to their shame and cowardice rather than to her criminality. In all probability she was guilty of nothing more than unwise levity ; her real crime was not adultery, but standing in the way of Henry's lawless desires. With the most unseemly haste, the king wedded Jane Seymour, the lady who had already attracted his notice, the moment that his wretched second wife had breathed her last.

But he had small leisure to spend on his wedding, for the year 1536 was one of great peril to him. A rebellion in Ireland, led by the Fitzgeralds, the greatest of the Anglo-Irish nobles, was already in progress. A still more dangerous phenomenon was the stir which was arising in the North of England. The Northern counties were always a generation behind the rest of England in their politics. There the monks were more powerful and less disliked than in any other part of the land, and the nobles still retained much of their old feudal power over their vassals, and some of their old turbulence. The North had beheld the breach with Rome with dismay and dislike, and remained strongly Papist in its sympathies. The dissolution of the monasteries moved it to an active protest against the king's religious action.

Rioting suddenly broke out in Lincolnshire, and then in Yorkshire. The insurgents gathered in great bands, and at last no less than 30,000 men mustered at Doncaster, under Robert Aske, a lawyer, and Lord Darcy. They called themselves the army of the Church, raised a banner displaying the five wounds of Christ as their standard,

The Pilgrimage
of Grace.

Rebellion in
Ireland and
the North.

and demanded a reconciliation with the Pope, the restoration of the religious houses, and the dismissal of the king's impious minister Cromwell, and the "heretic bishops" who had favoured the breach with Rome. The gentry of the North and the priors and abbots of the great abbeys of Yorkshire joined the rising, which men called "the Pilgrimage of Grace," because the rebels wished to go to meet the king, and to submit their demands to his personal judgment. Henry was caught unprepared, but he managed to extricate himself from the peril by his unscrupulous double-dealing. He sent the Duke of Norfolk, whose dislike of Protestantism was well known, to treat with the rebels. Norfolk pledged his word that the king would pardon the insurgents, and take all their demands into favourable consideration. The simple Northerners dispersed, trusting to Henry's good faith; but the king employed the time he had gained in raising an army, and getting together a great train of artillery. He then marched into Yorkshire as an invader, and made no further pretence of listening to the claims of the insurgents. In consequence, the more vehement of the partisans of the old faith again took arms. This was as Henry desired, for he wanted an excuse to terrorize the North. He easily put down the second rising, and hung all the leaders of the Pilgrimage of Grace: Aske, Lord Darcy, Lord Hussey, and the abbots of all the greatest monastic establishments of the North—Whalley, Fountains, Jervaulx, Barlings, and Sawley (March—May, 1537).

This fearful blow cowed most of the partisans of the papacy, and no more open revolts followed. But a little later the last representatives of the house of York were detected in paths which the king suspected to be treasonable. They thought, it seems, that the indignation of the Catholics against the king's doings might be turned into a dynastic revolution in favour of the old royal line. Edward Courtenay, Marquis of Exeter, a grandson of Edward IV., and Henry Pole, Lord Montagu, a grandson of George of Clarence, were the persons implicated in this intrigue, which never got beyond the stage of treasonable talk. Nevertheless, the king beheaded them both, though the evidence against them was most imperfect; but Henry never stayed his hand for want of legal proof, and slew all whom he suspected. He even

Execution of
the Marquis of
Exeter and
Henry Pole.

imprisoned, and some years afterwards executed, the aged mother of Lord Montagu—Margaret of Clarence, Countess of Salisbury, sister of the unfortunate Edward of Clarence, whom his father had slain forty-one years back.

The insurrection in Ireland, which had been raging at the same time as the Pilgrimage of Grace, ended in a way no less profitable to the king. Not only did he capture and hang well-nigh the whole family of the Fitzgeralds of Kildare, the heads of the rising, but his armies, under Lord-Deputy Grey, pushed out from the English Pale, and compelled most of the chiefs of Munster and Connaught to do homage to the Crown, though the king's writ had not run in those provinces for two centuries. This was the first step towards the conquest of Ireland afterwards carried out by Queen Elizabeth.

Meanwhile Henry's determination to strike at all the roots of papal power in England, had been carrying him further than he himself realized on the road towards Protestantism. The "Articles of 1536," drawn up by his own hand, declared that all doctrines and ceremonies for which authority could not be found in the Bible, were superstitious and erroneous. As a logical consequence of this declaration, the Bible itself, translated into English, was issued to the people by royal order in 1538, and ordered to be placed in every church. The translation used was that made by a zealous Protestant, William Tyndale, who had printed it in Antwerp some years before; the unfortunate translator had been caught and burnt by the Emperor Charles V., only a short time before his book became the rule of life for Englishmen.

When the Bible had once been placed in the hands of the people, Protestantism in England began to advance by leaps and bounds. It was secretly favoured both by Archbishop Cranmer and by the king's great minister Cromwell. The latter, more logical than his master, wished to see all traces of Roman Catholicism removed from England, and tried to guide the king towards a frank recognition of Protestantism, and an alliance with the Lutheran princes of Germany. But it was dangerous work to endeavour to govern or persuade Henry, as Cromwell was to find to his cost. One more step at least he did induce his master to take—

The Irish rebellion crushed.

Growth of Protestantism. Tyndale's Bible.

The greater monasteries suppressed.

the final destruction of all the remaining monasteries. The plunder of the lesser houses had been so profitable, that Henry was easily induced to doom the greater to the same fate. In the course of 1538-9-40 all were swept away; in many cases, the abbots and monks were induced to surrender their estates peaceably into the king's hands, in return for pensions or promotion. But where persuasion failed, force was used; an Act of Parliament was passed by Henry's submissive Commons, bestowing on him the lands of all monastic foundations. Then they were suppressed—the harmless and well-ordered ones no less than the worst and most corrupt. When the monks offered obstinate resistance, the king dealt very cruelly with them—the wealthy abbots of Glastonbury, Reading, and Colchester, were all hung, really for reluctance to surrender their houses, nominally for treason in refusing to acknowledge the king's complete spiritual supremacy as head of the Church. The enormous plunder of the monasteries brought the king little permanent good; he had promised to use it for ecclesiastical purposes, and had broached a scheme for founding many new churches and schools, and creating twenty fresh bishoprics. But in the end he lavished most of the lands of the religious houses upon those of the nobles and gentry whom he thought worth bribing. The Church only benefited by the endowing of the six new bishoprics—Oxford, Chester, Peterborough, Bristol, Gloucester, and the short-lived see of Westminster.

But Henry was resolved to show the Protestants that they must not expect his countenance, in spite of the blows which he was dealing at the Roman Catholics. In the very year in which the majority of the greater monasteries fell, he forced his Parliament to pass the cruel "Bill of the Six Articles." This odious measure condemned to forfeiture on the first offence, and to death on the second, all who should write or speak against certain of the ancient doctrines of the mediaeval Church, of which Transubstantiation in the Sacrament, the celibacy of the clergy, and auricular confession were the chief (1539).

Meanwhile the king had at last obtained the male heir for whom he had so much longed. His third wife, Jane Seymour, bore him a son, Prince Edward, in 1537, though she died at the child's birth. On this boy all Henry's fondness was lavished: he was to be the

**The Six
Articles.**

**Birth of a son.
Death of Jane
Seymour.**

sole heir to the throne, and his sisters, Mary and Elizabeth, were both stigmatized as illegitimate.

After he had mourned Queen Jane for two years, Henry wished to marry again. By Cromwell's persuasion he sought a wife among the Protestant princes of Germany, thinking so to strengthen himself against the Emperor Charles, who never to his death forgave him the matter of Catherine of Aragon's divorce. To his own ruin, Cromwell persuaded the king to choose Anne, sister of Duke William of Cleves, as his fourth spouse. The lady was plain and stupid—facts which Cromwell carefully concealed from his master till she had been solemnly betrothed to him and brought over to England. Henry was bitterly provoked when he was confronted with his new queen, and could not behave with ordinary civility to her. When he learnt that the German alliances which he was to buy with his marriage had fallen through, he repudiated the unfortunate Anne. She was fortunately of a philosophic mood, and readily consented to be bought off for a large annual pension and a handsome residence at Chelsea.

Henry at once wreaked his vengeance on Cromwell for deceiving him as to Anne and for failing in his negotiations with the German princes. He had him arrested, and accused him of receiving bribes and of having favoured the Protestants by "dispensing heretical books and secretly releasing heretics from prison." Both charges were probably true, but they form no excuse for Henry's cruel treatment of the faithful and intrepid minister who had helped him through all the troubles of 1536–40. Cromwell was attainted and beheaded, to the great joy of the Roman Catholics, who thought that he had been the king's tempter and evil genius, whereas in truth he had been no more than his tool.

Cromwell's end greatly encouraged the Roman Catholic party, and they were still more elated when the king married a lady known to incline towards the old faith. This was Catherine Howard, a cousin of Anne Boleyn and, like her, a niece of the Duke of Norfolk (1540). Henry had been caught by her beauty, and had not discovered that she was a person of abandoned manners, whose amours were known to many persons about the court.

Within eighteen months of her marriage, she was detected in misconduct with one of her old lovers, and sent to the block. In her case Henry had much more excuse for his ruthless cruelty than in that of Anne Boleyn; but what kind of wives could a monarch of such manners expect to find? He was undeservedly fortunate in his sixth marriage, with Catherine Parr, the dowager Lady Latimer, whom he wedded a year after Catherine Howard's execution. She was a young widow of twenty-six, a person of piety and discretion, who gave no opportunity of offence to the king, and nursed him faithfully through the infirmities of his later years. For Henry, who had now reached the age of fifty-two, was growing grossly corpulent and developing a complication of diseases which racked him fearfully during the last five years of his life, and partly explain the frantic exhibitions of cruelty to which he often gave way.

The time was a very evil one for England. Not only was the king persecuting Romanist and Protestant indifferently, but he had added external to internal troubles. A war with Scotland had broken out in 1540, and was always keeping the northern frontier unquiet, though the English had the better in the fighting. James V. allied himself to France, and Henry had to keep guard against attacks on the south as well as the north. The victory of Solway Moss (November, 1542) put an end to any danger from Scotland; the news of it killed King James, who left his throne to his infant daughter Mary, the celebrated "Queen of Scots." Her minority gave rise to factious struggles among the Scottish nobles, and Henry, by buying over one party, was able to keep the rest in check. In 1544 a great English army, under the Earl of Hertford, Jane Seymour's brother, laid waste the whole of the Lowlands and burnt Edinburgh, but did not succeed in driving the enemy to sue for peace.

The French war was far more dangerous. King Francis collected a great fleet in Normandy, and threatened an invasion of England. Henry was forced to arm and pay a vast array of shire levies to meet the attack, but when it came (1545) the French were only able to land and make a raid in the Isle of Wight. They drew back after fruitlessly demonstrating against Portsmouth and burning a few English ships. The balance of gain in the war was actually in

favour of Henry, who had taken Boulogne (1544), and proved able to retain it against all attempts, till it was ceded to him by France at the peace of 1546.

But the struggles with France and Scotland had the most disastrous effects on the finances of the realm. Henry had wasted all the wealth that he had wrested from the monasteries, and now, to fill his pockets, tried the unrighteous expedient of debasing the currency. English money, which had been hitherto the best and purest in Europe, was horribly misused by him. He put one-sixth of copper into the gold sovereign, and one-half and afterwards two-thirds of copper into the silver shilling, to the lamentable defrauding of his subjects, who found that English money would no longer be accepted by Continental traders, though previously it had been more esteemed than that of any other country.

The debasement of the coinage was only one of the many symptoms of misgovernment which embittered the end of Henry's reign. The general upheaval of society caused by the overthrow of the monasteries, and the sudden transfer of their enormous estates to new holders, had given rise to much distress. Not only were the paupers who had lived on the monks' doles, and the pilgrims who had been wont to wander from abbey to abbey, thrown on the world to beg, but many of the old tenant farmers were displaced. For the new owners often preferred sheep-breeding to agriculture, and drove out the cottiers who had been wont to hold a few acres under the old-fashioned management of the monastic bodies. Contemporary writers speak bitterly of the plague of "sturdy and valiant beggars" who flooded the land—unfrooked monks, pilgrims whose trade was over, disbanded soldiers, and evicted peasantry. The king and his Parliament issued the most ferocious laws against these vagrants—when apprehended they were to be branded, and given as serfs for two years to any one who chose to ask for their services. If caught a second time, they were liable to be hung as incorrigible.

To complete this gloomy picture, there only remains to be added the story of the king's last outburst of suspicion and cruelty. Conceiving that the Duke of Norfolk and his son, the Earl of Surrey, were counting on his approaching death to make an attempt to seize

**Debasement of
the currency.**

**Growth of
pauperism.**

**Execution of
the Earl of
Surrey.**

the regency, he had them both apprehended, though nothing definite could be alleged against them, save that of late they had taken to quartering the royal arms in their family shield—a distinction to which they were entitled as descended from Edward III. Surrey, a soldier of great promise and a poet of considerable power, was beheaded; his father was doomed to follow him, had not the king's death intervened. It is even said that Henry, in one of his more irritable moods, was threatening to try his blameless wife, Queen Catherine, for concealed Protestantism.

But to the general relief of England, Henry died before this last crime could be consummated (January 28, 1547). He left his realm in a condition of great misery, and for all its troubles he was personally responsible. His breach with the papacy had been the result of private pique, not of conscience or principle. When committed to the anti-Roman cause, he had refused to move forward with the one half of his subjects, or to remain behind with the other. He had anchored the English Church for a time in a middle position, intolerable alike to Protestant Reformers and to the Partisans of the Papacy and subjection to Rome. If the nation owed him a certain debt of gratitude for not committing England to some of the excesses of Continental Protestantism, yet it owed him no thanks for officering the Church with a hierarchy of bishops, some of whom, like Cranmer, were meanly timid and pliant, while others were men of low ideals and unworthy lives, the mere creatures of court favour. Nor is it possible to view with equanimity the way in which Henry wasted on pageants, foreign intrigues, and fawning courtiers, the vast sums which the State had acquired by the very proper and necessary abolition of the monasteries.

Of Henry's unbounded selfishness, of his ingratitude to those who had served him best, of his ruthless cruelty to all who stood in his way, we need not further speak. The story of his reign develops each of these traits in its own particular blackness.

Some historians have endeavoured to justify Henry's wavering foreign policy, and all his forcible-feeble wars with Continental powers, by the plea that, if he got no gain in land or gold thereby, yet he raised England to a higher place among European nations than she had held in his father's

Death of
Henry.—
Condition of
England.

Henry's foreign
policy.

day. But this statement seems unwise. Henry, though much flattered and courted at times, was in fact the mere dupe of Francis I. and Charles V., each of whom cheated him again and again, and left him hopelessly in the lurch. England's growing wealth and power would have won her back her proper place in Europe far better than Henry's chaotic intrigues. His whole foreign policy was a mistake and a tangle from first to last.

It remained to be seen who would now sway the sword and sceptre that the dead tyrant had gripped so firmly. In his last years Henry had surrounded himself by ministers less notable and less capable than Wolsey or Cromwell. The chief place was held by his brother-in-law, Edward Seymour, Earl of Hertford, the brother of the unfortunate Queen Jane, and the uncle of Prince Edward, the heir to the crown. It was natural that the charge of the young king—a bright and promising, but delicate lad, now in his tenth year—should fall to his uncle; but the late king, distrusting Hertford's wisdom, had left the regency, not to him individually, but to a council of sixteen members, of which he was but the president. Seymour, however, succeeded in getting a more complete control over his colleagues than had been intended, mainly by bribing them to consent with titles and large gifts of money. They allowed him to make himself "Protector of the realm and of the king's person," and to create himself Duke of Somerset. In return he made the two chief members of the council earls; Wriothesley, head of the Anglo-Catholic party, became Earl of Southampton; Dudley—son of that Dudley who had paid with his head for serving Henry VII. too well—was created Earl of Warwick.

Having seized the reins of power, the Duke of Somerset soon showed himself a man of a character very different from the late king's expectation. Instead of pursuing the middle course of Anglo-Catholic policy which Henry had always marked out, he threw himself at once into the hands of the Protestants. His first actions were directed towards the completion of the Reformation, by sweeping away all those remnants of the old faith which the late king had retained himself and imposed upon his subjects. Henry VIII. had issued the Bible in English, and caused the Litany and certain other parts of the Church service to be said

**The regency.—
The Duke of
Somerset
Protector.**

**Protestantism
of Somerset.—
First English
Prayer-book.**

in the national tongue. But Somerset abolished the use of the Latin language altogether, and caused the Communion Service and all the rest of the rites of the Church to be celebrated in English. By the end of 1548 he had authorized the issue of the "First Book of Common Prayer," the earliest form of our own Anglican Prayer-book. Cranmer had the chief part in its compilation, and his great gifts of expression are borne witness to by many of the most spiritual and beautiful prayers of our splendid and sonorous liturgy. When the fear of Henry had been removed from his mind, Cranmer showed himself an undoubted Protestant; but he was a moderate man, and spared many old rites and customs, harmless in themselves, from a love of conservatism. The Prayer-book was well received by all save the extreme Romanists, and the few partisans of Continental Protestantism who complained that it did not go far enough.

If the introduction of the English Prayer-book was both popular and necessary, it was far otherwise with the measures which accompanied it. Somerset's first year of rule was the time of the demolition of all the old church ornaments and furniture, which the Protestants condemned as mere idols and lumber. Not only were the images and pictures removed, but much beautiful carved work and stained glass was ruthlessly broken up. This was done with an irreverence and violence which deeply shocked the majority of the nation, and Somerset's agents made no distinction between monuments of superstition and harmless works of religious art. Two of the bishops, Bonner of London and Gardiner of Winchester, who ventured to oppose the Protector's doings, were placed in honourable confinement.

While England was disturbed with these changes, many of them rational and necessary, but all of them hasty and rash, Somerset had succeeded in plunging the realm into two foreign wars. The English party north of the Tweed had promised the hand of their little five-year-old Queen Mary to King Edward, but when they proved unable to fulfil their promise, owing to the hatred of the majority of the Scots for England, the Protector resolved to use coercive measures. He declared war, and invaded the Lowlands in the autumn of 1547, wasting the country before him till he was met by the whole levy of Scotland on the hillside of Pinkie, near Musselborough. There he inflicted on them a bloody defeat,

**Invasion of
Scotland.—
Battle of
Pinkie.**

but gained no advantage thereby ; for the Scots sent their child-queen over to France, to keep her safe from English hands, and when she reached the court of Henry II. she was wedded to his son, the Dauphin Francis. Thus Somerset entirely lost the object of his campaign, and only earned the desperate hate of the Scots for the carnage of Pinkie.

The war with Scotland brought about a war with France, in which the Protector wasted much money. The struggle went

Plots and Re-
bellions in
England.

against the English, and ultimately led to the loss of Boulogne, the sole conquest of Henry VIII.

While this war was in progress, Somerset was involved in serious troubles within the bounds of England itself. He detected his own brother, Lord Seymour of Sudely, plotting to marry the Princess Elizabeth, and oust him from the regency. Seymour was pardoned once, but, on renewing his conspiracy, was apprehended and beheaded. But domestic plots were less to be feared than popular risings. In 1548-49 two dangerous rebellions broke out in West and East. In Devonshire the old Catholic party rose in arms, clamouring for the restoration of the Mass and the suppression of Protestantism. In the Eastern Counties an insurrection of another sort was seen ; the peasantry banded themselves together under the tanner Robert Ket, who called himself the " King of Norfolk and Suffolk." They dreamed of a social revolution such as that which Wat Tyler had demanded in an earlier age, though their grievances were not the same as those of the fourteenth century. They complained of the rapacity of the new landholders who had superseded the old monastic bodies, and who were evicting the old peasantry right and left, and turning farms into sheep-runs, because wool paid better than corn. The enclosure of common lands, the debasement of the coinage, and the slowness and inefficacy of the law when used by the poor man, were also denounced. Ket and his fellows began seizing and trying unpopular landholders, and spoke of making a clean sweep of the upper classes.

Now, the Protector had no scruple in putting down the rising of the Devonshire Papists with great severity, but he felt that

Ket's rebellion
put down.

the Norfolk men had great excuses for their anger, and did not deal promptly and sternly with them.

Ket's rising became very dangerous, and it seemed as if

anarchy would set in all over the Eastern Counties. The rebels defeated the Earl of Northampton, and stormed Norwich; they were only dispersed at last by Dudley, the Earl of Warwick, who marched against them with a mercenary force which had been collected for the Scottish war, and routed them on Mousehold Heath. Ket was then hung, and the rebellion subsided.

Somerset's mismanagement and weakness had so disgusted his colleagues in the regency that, after the eastern rebellion, they resolved to depose him from the Protectorship. Finding that he could count on small support, and that the council would be able to turn against him the armies which had pacified Norfolk and Devon, he wisely laid down his power. He was sent for a short time to the Tower, but soon the council released him, and gave him a place among them (1550).

Somerset's place was taken by John Dudley, the Earl of Warwick, son of the extortionate minister of Henry VII. The new Protector was far more unscrupulous and corrupt than his predecessor. Somerset had been a well-meaning if an incapable ruler. Warwick was purely self-seeking, and cared nothing for national ends. He showed himself not much more competent as a ruler than the man he had overthrown, but he kept his power more firmly than Somerset, because he never hesitated to strike down all who opposed him, without any regard for justice or mercy.

Warwick, finding the Protestant party in the ascendant, used them for his own ends, though in reality he was perfectly indifferent to religion. His tendencies were shown by the appointment of several bishops of ultra-Protestant views, and by the issuing of the "Second Book of Common Prayer," to supersede the first. In this volume strong signs of the influence of Continental Protestantism are found, and the many traces of the pre-Reformation ritual were swept away.

Warwick's administration (1550-53) was no happier than Somerset's. He was forced to make a humiliating peace with France, and to surrender Boulogne. Though he began to reform the coinage by issuing good silver money, yet he made the change harmful to the people by refusing to take back the old

Deposition of
Somerset.

Earl of War-
wick Protector.

His religious
policy.—Second
Book of Com-
mon Prayer.

base money at the rate at which it had been issued,* and by actually uttering a considerable amount of debased money himself.

But reckless self-seeking was the main key-note of Warwick's rule. He employed his power unscrupulously to enrich both himself and his family. He took for himself the title of Duke of Northumberland, and ere long allied himself to the royal house by marrying his younger son, Guildford Dudley, to the king's cousin, Lady Jane Grey, the granddaughter of the Princess Mary, the favourite sister of Henry VIII. This alliance led him into schemes which were to prove his ruin. The young king was a bright and precocious boy, showing signs of capacity and strength of will beyond his years. If he had lived, he would have been a man of mark, for already in his sixteenth year he was showing a keen interest in politics and religion, and a tendency to think for himself. But he was incurably delicate, and by 1553 was obviously falling into consumption.

Dudley saw that his power was bound to vanish on the king's death, if the law of succession was maintained, and the king's eldest sister Mary, the child of Catherine of Aragon, allowed to succeed. The late king had drawn up a will, in which he indicated that, if Edward died, he should be followed first by Mary, and then by her younger sister Elizabeth, the daughter of Anne Boleyn. Henry had then added that, if all his children died heirless, he left the crown to the issue of his favourite sister Mary, the Duchess of Suffolk, and not to the descendants of his elder sister, Margaret of Scotland.

Now, Lady Jane Grey, the heiress of Mary of Suffolk, was in Northumberland's hands, through her marriage with his son.

Accordingly, the duke resolved to persuade the young king to cut his sisters out of the succession, and leave the crown by will to his cousin. The pretext used was that both Mary and Elizabeth were illegitimate, the marriages of Catherine and of Anne to Henry VIII. having both been declared void at different times by the obsequious

* He would only take back as sixpences the base testoons (or shillings) which Somerset had paid out from the treasury at full value, alleging truly enough that they had but $4\frac{1}{2}d.$ of good silver in them.

Parliaments of the last reign. It was, of course, utterly absurd that a boy of sixteen should have the power to make a will transferring the crown, for by English usage the king's title depended on hereditary right and Parliamentary sanction, not on the arbitrary decision of his predecessor. It was entirely unconstitutional to think of disinheriting the two princesses by a mere private document drawn up by their brother. But the young king was persuaded to grant his guardian's request, mainly because he feared the Romanist reaction which he knew would follow on the accession of his elder sister, who had always remained an obstinate adherent of the papacy.

Long before the king's death, Northumberland had taken all the measures which he thought necessary for carrying out this arbitrary change in the succession. He had packed the council with his hired partisans, and swept away the only man that he feared, his predecessor Somerset. Execution of
Somerset. For noting that the late Protector was regaining popularity, and might prove a check upon him, he suddenly laid against him charges of treason and felony, alleging that he was plotting to regain the regency by force of arms. The unfortunate Somerset was condemned and executed, to the great indignation of the people, who esteemed his good heart, though they had doubted his judgment (1552).

All through the following year King Edward's health was failing, and Dudley was perfecting his plans. In the summer of 1553 the young king wasted away, and slowly sank into his grave. His cousin, Lady Jane, was at once proclaimed queen by the unscrupulous Protector.

CHAPTER XXIII.

THE CATHOLIC REACTION.

1553-1558.

THE death of Edward VI. gave the signal for the outbreak of trouble all over England. The nation had acquiesced in the selfish and unscrupulous government of North-
 England loyal to Princess Mary. umberland solely because of its loyalty to the young king. When Edward passed away, it became at once evident that the Protector's power had no firm base, and that his attempt to change the succession would be fruitless. For every man, the Protestant no less than the Catholic, was fully persuaded that the Princess Mary was the true heir to the crown, and there was no party in the state—save the personal adherents of Dudley—who were prepared to strike a blow against her.

Meanwhile, however, the Protector proclaimed his daughter-in-law queen in London, though citizens and courtiers alike maintained an attitude of cold disapproval. The
 Lady Jane Grey proclaimed queen. Lady Jane was personally well liked ; she was an innocent girl of seventeen, who loved her husband and her books, and had no knowledge or skill in affairs of state. But every one knew that she was a usurper—a fact which no personal merits could glaze over.

Northumberland directed his first efforts to seize the person of the Princess Mary. He sent his son, the Earl of Warwick, to lay hands on her, but she escaped and fled into the
 Collapse and execution of Northumberland. Eastern Counties, where the gentry of Norfolk and Suffolk, the most Protestant shires in the kingdom, hailed her as queen, and armed to defend her. Warwick's troops dispersed when he strove to induce them to attack the followers

of the rightful heiress. This alarming symptom startled the Protector out of his security ; he raised a larger force and set out at once to suppress the rising. But the moment that he had left London there was an outbreak in the capital itself. The majority of the royal council, when Northumberland's eye was off them, threw in their lot with the rioters, and London fell into the hands of Mary's partisans. Nor was this all. The whole of the shires from north to south rose in Mary's favour, and the Protector, who had marched as far as Cambridge, saw his army melt away from him. When the Earl of Arundel came against him in the name of the rightful queen, he was constrained to give up his sword and yield himself a prisoner. He was brought back to London, tried, and condemned for high treason. His last days showed the meanness of his character ; for, in the hope of propitiating the queen, he declared himself a Catholic, heard Mass, and made fulsome and degrading protestations of contrition and humility. They did not save his life, for he was beheaded, to the great joy of all England, only six weeks after the death of Edward VI. (August 22, 1553). Mary cast into prison all Northumberland's tools : the unfortunate Lady Jane—queen for just thirteen days—her husband Lord Guildford Dudley, her father the Duke of Suffolk, and most of the Dudley kin. For the present they suffered no further harm.

The rightful heiress was now set upon the throne, and England had leisure to look on her and learn her moods. Mary was in her thirty-ninth year. Ever since her unfortunate mother's divorce she had been living in neglect and seclusion ; her father had stigmatized her as a bastard, and her brother had kept her from court. For twenty years she had been nursing her own and her mother's wrongs in lonely country manors, denied all the state and deference that were her due, and closely supervised by the underlings of the Crown. It was small wonder that she had grown up discontented, suspicious, and morose. One help had sustained her through all her troubles—her intense faith in the old creed, which she believed to be true, and therefore bound to triumph in the end. *Veritas temporis filia* was her favourite motto.* Mary's Catholicism was something more than earnest ; it was a devouring flame, ready to consume all that stood in its way. She was set on

* For example, she chose it for her coinage.

avenging all the blood that had been shed by her father, all the insults to the old faith that had been inflicted by the ministers of her brother. She thought that she had come with a mission not merely to reconcile England to the papacy, but to scourge her for her past backsliding.

The nation did not yet know of the habits of mind which its mistress harboured. The Protestants were ready to acquiesce in her rule; the majority, who were neither Protestants nor Papists, trusted that she was about to take up the middle course that her father had chosen; the Romanist minority hardly expected more than this from her at the first. But Mary's actions soon showed that she was set on a more violent reaction; not only did she release from bonds the imprisoned bishops, Bonner and Gardiner, the old Duke of Norfolk—a captive since 1547—and all others who had suffered under her father and brother, but she began to molest those who had taken a prominent part in the religious doings of the late reign. Proceedings were begun against ten Protestant bishops, including Cranmer, the Primate of England, before she had been two months on the throne. Some of them fled over seas; the others were caught and put into confinement. The restoration of the Latin Mass was everywhere commanded. All married clergy were threatened with removal from their benefices. Mary began to speak openly of placing her realm under the supremacy of the Pope, and even of restoring to the Church all the monastic estates that her father had appropriated, an idea which filled every landowner with dismay.

Meanwhile, another project was filling Mary's brain. She was determined to marry, and to rear up a Catholic heir to the throne; for she hated her half-sister, the Princess Elizabeth — Anne Boleyn's child — and utterly refused to acknowledge her legitimacy, or to own her as her next of kin. Mary had conceived a romantic affection on hearsay evidence for her cousin, Philip of Spain, the son and heir of the Emperor Charles V., a young prince twelve years her junior, whose charms and merits had been grossly overpraised to her by interested persons. The prospect of winning England for his son allured the Emperor, and he warmly pressed the marriage, though Philip did not view with satisfaction the pursuit of such an elderly bride.

Projected marriage with Philip of Spain.

When the queen's intention of wedding Philip of Spain began to be known, it led to great discontent, for such a match implied not only a close union with the papal party on the Continent, but the resumption of the war with France, which had brought so much loss and so little gain under Henry VIII. and Edward VI. ; for Spain and France were still involved in their standing struggle for domination on the Continent, and alliance with the one meant war with the other.

Unpopularity
of the Spanish
match.

When the queen's betrothal to Philip was announced, trouble at once followed. The Protestant party had viewed with dismay the restoration of the Mass, and foresaw persecution close at hand ; many who were not Protestants were anxious to stop the Spanish marriage and the renewal of the foreign war. Hence came the breaking out of a dangerous rebellion, aiming at Mary's deposition, and the substitution for her of her sister Elizabeth, who was, however, kept in ignorance of the plot. The conspirators intended her to marry Edward Courtenay, Earl of Devon, son of the Courtenay, Marquis of Exeter, whom Henry VIII. had beheaded in 1539, and last heir of the house of York. Courtenay himself, a vain and incapable young man, was not the real head of the conspiracy, which was mainly guided by the Duke of Suffolk—the father of Lady Jane Grey—and by Sir Thomas Wyatt, a young knight of Kent. Courtenay's babbling folly betrayed the plot too soon, and the conspirators had to rise before they were ready. Their armed bands were easily crushed in all parts of England save in Kent ; Wyatt raised 10,000 men in that very Protestant county, and boldly marched on London. The Government had no sufficient force ready to hold him back, and he nearly succeeded in seizing the capital and the queen's person, for many of the Londoners were ready to throw open the gates to him. But the queen induced him to halt for a day by sending offers for an accommodation, and when he reached London Bridge he found it so strongly held that after some heavy fighting he gave up the passage as impossible, and started westward to cross the Thames at Kingston. This delay saved Mary. She displayed great courage and activity, hurried up to London all the trustworthy gentry within her reach, persuaded many of the citizens to arm in her favour, and was able to offer a firm resistance

Wyatt's re-
bellion.

when Wyatt at last appeared in Middlesex and pressed on into the western suburbs of the city. The queen's troops and the insurgents fought a running fight from Knightsbridge to Charing Cross ; Wyatt, with the head of his column, cut his way down the Strand as far as Ludgate Hill, but his main body was broken up and dispersed, and he himself, after a gallant struggle, was taken prisoner at Temple Bar.

Mary had much excuse for severity against the conquered rebels, but her vengeance went far beyond the bounds of wisdom.

**Harsh mea-
sures of Mary.** Wyatt was cruelly tortured to make him implicate the Princess Elizabeth in the plot, but died protesting that he had acted without her knowledge. Suffolk and his brother, Sir Thomas Grey, were beheaded ; eighty of the more important rebels were hung ; but in addition the unpardonable crime of slaying Lady Jane Grey was committed. She and her husband had been prisoners all the time of the rising, but Mary thought the opportunity of getting rid of her too good to be lost, and beheaded both her and Lord Guildford Dudley, on the vain pretence that they had been concerned in the conspiracy. The young ex-queen suffered with a dignity and constancy that moved all hearts, affirming to the last her firm adherence to the Protestant faith, and her innocence of all treasonable intent against her cousin (February 12, 1554). There seems little doubt that the queen's own sister, the Princess Elizabeth, would have shared Lady Jane's fate, if only sufficient evidence against her could have been procured. The incapable Earl of Devon owed his life to his insignificance, and was banished after a long sojourn in the Tower.

Victorious over her enemies, Queen Mary was now able to carry out her unwise plans without hindrance. In July, 1554, **Marriage with Philip.** Philip of Spain came over from Flanders, and wedded her at Winchester. In the same autumn **Submission to Rome.** a Parliament, elected under strong royal pressure, voted in favour of reconciliation with Rome, and a complete acknowledgment of the papal supremacy. In the capacity of Legate to England, there appeared Reginald Pole, a long-exiled English cardinal of Yorkist blood, brother of that Lord Montagu whom Henry VIII. had slain in 1539. He solemnly absolved the two Houses of Parliament from the papal excommunication which so long had lain upon the land. Shortly afterwards the

submission of the realm to the papacy was celebrated in the most typical way by the solemn re-enacting of the cruel statute of Henry IV., *De Heretico Comburendo*, which made the stake once more the doom of all who refused to obey the Pope. Mary herself, a fanatical party among her bishops, of whom Bonner of London was the worst, and the Legate must all take their share of the responsibility for this crime. The queen had her wrongs to revenge; the bishops had suffered long in prison under King Edward; Pole had been accused by his enemies of Lutheranism, and was anxious to vindicate his orthodoxy by showing a readiness to put Protestants to death.

From the moment of the enacting of the laws against heresy (January, 1555), the history of Mary's reign became a catalogue of horrors. Even the callous Philip of Spain, moved by policy if not by pity, besought his wife to hold her hand. But Mary was inflexible. The burnings began with those of Hooper, Bishop of Gloucester, and Rogers, Prebendary of St. Paul's, in February, 1555. They went steadily on at the rate of about ten persons a month, till the queen's death. The persecution raged worst in London, the see of the rough and harsh Bishop Bonner; in Canterbury, where Pole succeeded Cranmer; and in the Eastern Counties; there were comparatively few victims in the West and North. As cautious men fled overseas, and weak men conformed to the queen's faith, it was precisely the most fervent and pious of the Protestants who suffered. The sight of so many men of godly life and blameless conversation going to the stake for their faith, achieved the end that neither the sternness of Henry VIII. nor the violence of Northumberland had been able to secure—it practically converted England to Protestantism. The bigoted queen was always remembered by the English as "Bloody Mary;" her victims as "the Martyrs." A few of them deserve special mention: Latimer, Bishop of Worcester, and Ridley, Bishop of London, were burnt together under the walls of Oxford, on September 7, 1555, after being kept in prison for two years. They had been well known as the best of the Protestant bishops, and Latimer's fearless sermons had often protested, in the presence of the late king and the Protectors, against the self-seeking and corruption of the court. "Play the man, Master Ridley," said Latimer, when he and his companion stood at the stake; "for we shall this day light such

Persecution of
the Protest-
ants—Latimer
and Ridley.

a candle in England, as by the grace of God shall never be put out."

Six months later there suffered a man of weaker and more vacillating faith, Archbishop Cranmer, against whom the queen was especially bitter, because he had pronounced Cranmer burnt. her mother's divorce. Cranmer was a man of real piety, but wholly destitute of moral courage. His jailors forced him to witness the burning of Ridley and Latimer, in order to shake his courage, and subjected him to many harassing trials and cross-examinations, under which his spirit at last broke down. Yielding to a moment of weakness, and lured by a false hint that he might save his life by recantation, he consented to be received back into the Roman Communion. But when he found that his enemies were set upon his death, he refused to conform, bade the multitude assembled in St. Mary's Church at Oxford "beware of the Pope, Christ's enemy, a very Antichrist with all his false doctrine," and went with firmness to the stake, thrusting first into the flames the right hand with which he had written his promise to recant (March, 1556).

Altogether there suffered in the Marian persecution five bishops and about 300 others, among whom were included several women and even children. Mary looked upon her wicked doings not merely as righteous in themselves, but as a means of moving Heaven in her favour for the great end that she had in view—the raising up of a Catholic heir. Her heart was set on bearing a son, and when this was denied her, she fell into a state of gloomy depression. Her morbid and hysterical temper rendered her insufferable to her husband Philip, who betook himself to the Continent, where his father, Charles V., was about to abdicate in his favour. After he became King of Spain (1556) he only paid one short visit to his English realm and his jealous wife, and escaped as quickly as he might. Mary remained a prey to melancholy and disease, and obstinately persisted in "working out her salvation" by faggot and stake. The country grew more and more discontented; conspiracy was rife, fostered by the exiled Protestants, who had gathered in Paris, and tried to excite rebellion by the aid of the King of France. Their efforts nearly cost the life of the Princess Elizabeth, whom the queen kept in confinement, and would have slain if her cautious sister had not been wise enough to avoid all suspicion of offence.

The war with France, which was the necessary consequence of the Spanish match, proved very disastrous for England. Mary's ministers gave Philip no very useful help, while, on the other hand, they contrived to lose the last Continental possession of the Crown. Calais, which had remained in English hands ever since Edward III. captured it in 1346, was suddenly invested by the Duke of Guise, who commanded the French army of the North. The garrison was caught unprepared, and was very weak in numbers. After a few days' siege it was forced to yield, before any help could come either from England or Spain (January, 1558). This disgrace told heavily on the queen's health; she cried that when she died "Calais" would be found written on her heart, and fell into a deeper melancholy than before.

War with
France.—Loss
of Calais.

Yet her miserable life was protracted ten months longer, and she survived till November, 1558, racked by disease, and calling in vain for her absent husband, yet persecuting vigorously to the last. Her cousin and adviser, Cardinal Pole, died within three days of her.

So ended Mary Tudor, who in five years had rendered Romanism more hateful in the eyes of Englishmen than five centuries of papal aggression had availed to make it, and who had by her persecutions caused the adoption of Protestantism under her successor to become inevitable.

CHAPTER XXIV.

ELIZABETH.

1558-1603.

WHEN Mary Tudor had passed away unwept and unregretted, all England heaved a sigh of relief, and turned to do homage to her sister Elizabeth. The daughter of Anne Boleyn was now a young woman of twenty-five. She had been living for the last five years in almost continual peril of her life, and had required all her caution to keep herself from the two snares which lay about her—the dangers of being accused of treason on the one hand and of heresy on the other. Fortunately for herself, Elizabeth was politic and cautious even to excess—all through her reign her most trusted ministers were often unable to discern her real thoughts and wishes—so that she came unharmed through her sister's reign of terror.

But when the lords of the council came flocking to Hatfield—the place of her honourable confinement—to salute her as queen,

The religious crisis. Elizabeth knew that her feet were still set in slippery places. The ultra-Catholic party was

still in power, and the large majority of the nation were professing Romanists; on the other hand, she knew that her sister had made the name of Rome hateful, and there was a powerful and active band of Protestants, some in exile and some at home, who were ready to rush in and violently reverse all that Mary had done, if the new sovereign would give them any encouragement. Moreover, there was grave danger abroad: England was in the midst of war with France, yet Philip of Spain, the late queen's husband, was likely to be more dangerous than even the King of France, for it was obvious that he would be loth to let England out of his grasp, after he had profited by her alliance for four years.

Elizabeth's personal predilections, like those of her father,

were in favour neither of Romanism nor of Protestantism. She did not wish to be the slave of the Pope, nor did she intend to be the tool of the zealots who had picked up in their Continental exile the newest doctrines of the Swiss and German Reformers. At the same time, she wished to offend neither the Catholic nor the Protestant, but to lead them both into the *via media* of an English National Church, which should be both orthodox and independent. She was not a woman of much spiritual piety or fervent zeal, and, judging from her own feelings, argued that it would be possible to make others conform, without much difficulty, to the Church which offered the happy mean.

The queen's
attitude.

Her position, however, was settled for her by the obstinacy of the extreme Romanists. The bishops whom Mary had appointed behaved in the most arrogant and insulting manner to her. When she had been duly saluted as queen by the nation and the Parliament, they tacitly denied her right to the throne; for with one accord they refused to be present at her coronation, much more to place the crown upon her head. In the view of the strict Papist, she was a bastard and a usurper. It was with great difficulty that a single bishop—Oglethorpe, of Carlisle—was at last persuaded to officiate at the ceremony. This senseless obstinacy on the part of the prelates drove Elizabeth further in the direction of Protestantism than she had intended to go. She was constrained to send for the exiled Protestant bishops of King Edward's making, and to replace them in their sees. The disloyal Romanist prelates were deposed, and in their places new men were consecrated by the restored Protestant bishops. Elizabeth took care that they should be moderate personages, who might be trusted not to give trouble; the most important of them was the new Archbishop of Canterbury, Matthew Parker, a wise and pious man, who guided the Church of England through the crisis with singular discretion.

The extreme
Romanists.

As it was impossible to conciliate the extreme Romanists, the queen resolved to take up her father's position, with some modifications in the direction of Protestantism. Unlike Henry VIII., she did not call herself Supreme Head of the Church, but all her subjects were summoned to take the oath of spiritual obedience to her. Only a few hundred persons refused it, though among

them were all the old bishops. But the moderate Catholics accepted her, though they did not sacrifice their faith to their loyalty. Elizabeth then issued a new Liturgy to be the standard of the Creed of the English Church : it was a revision of the Second Prayer-book of Edward VI., amended in such a way as to make it less expressive of the views of the extreme Protestants. The Latin Mass was forbidden, and all the old ceremonies, which Mary had restored, were again swept away. There was, however, no attempt at enforcing obedience by persecution. Elizabeth had taken warning by the fate of her brother's and her sister's measures, and trusted to loyalty and national feeling, not to prison or stake. She was wise in her generation, for in ten years well-nigh all the moderate Catholics had conformed to the Anglican formularies, rallying to the national church when they saw that it was not to become ultra-Protestant. Their adhesion was the more easily effected because the Pope, on purely political grounds, did not excommunicate Elizabeth, or declare her deposed, so that to hold to the old faith was not yet inconsistent with loyalty to the Crown.

Ere Elizabeth's religious bent had been clearly ascertained, her widowed brother-in-law, Philip of Spain, had proposed that she should marry him, for he was much set on maintaining his hold on England. Elizabeth detested him, and steadfastly refused the offer, but with a show of politeness, lest she might bring war on herself. Fearing that when foiled Philip might become dangerous, she made peace and alliance with his enemy, the King of France, and left Calais in his hands, receiving instead a sum of 500,000 crowns.

Thus Elizabeth had tided over the first difficulties of her reign, and felt her throne growing firmer beneath her, though there were still dangers on every side. But her character was well suited to cope with the situation. Though marred by many failings peculiarly feminine, she had a man's brain and decision. She was vain of her handsome person, and loved to be flattered and worshipped ; but her vanity was not great enough to induce her to put herself under the hand of a husband. She listened to suitor after suitor, but said them nay in the end. Only one of them ever seems to have touched her heart—this was Robert Dudley, Earl of Leicester, the son of

Protestant re-
forms.—Adhe-
sion of the
moderate
Catholics.

Philip of Spain.

Character of
the queen.

Protector Northumberland. Though much taken with his comely face, the queen had strength of mind to deny him her hand, seeing that marriage with a subject would bring too many feuds and jealousies in its train. She consoled herself with pageants and pleasures, for which she retained a curious zest even far into her old age. Every one has heard of her elaborate toilette and her thousand gowns, and of how she danced before foreign ambassadors after she had passed the age of sixty.

But the vanity and love of pleasure which she inherited from her mother, Anne Boleyn, were of comparatively little moment in the ordering of the queen's life, because her clear and cold brain dominated her desires. Elizabeth was as cautious, as suspicious, and as secretive, as her grandfather Henry VII. She was very unscrupulous in her diplomacy, and did not stick at a lie when an evasion would no longer serve. Though she had plenty of courage for moments of danger, yet she always put off the struggle as long as possible, holding that every day of respite that she gained might chance to give some unexpected end to the crisis. It is undoubted that she missed many opportunities owing to this cautious slowness, but she also saved herself from many traps into which a more hasty politician would have fallen. We shall have to notice, again and again, her reluctance to interfere in the wars of the Continent, even when it had become inevitable that she must ultimately choose her side. This same caution made her a very economical ruler. She grudged every penny that was spent—except, indeed, the outgoings of her own privy purse—and often pushed parsimony to the most unwise extreme. The very fleet that defeated the Spanish Armada ran short both of powder and provisions before the fighting was quite over.

The English much admired their politic, unscrupulous, and parsimonious queen. They saw only that she gave them good and cheap governance, kept the kingdom out of unnecessary wars, and was, on the whole, both Her
popularity. tolerant and merciful. As they watched her pick her way successfully through so many snares and perils, they came to look upon her as a sort of second Providence, and credited her with an almost superhuman sagacity and omniscience, which she was far from possessing. But they were not altogether wrong in their confidence; she was, in spite of her faults and foibles, a patriotic, clear-headed, hard-working sovereign, who did her best

for her people as well as for herself. Above all, she had the invaluable gift of choosing her servants well; her two great ministers, Cecil and Walsingham, were the most capable men in England for their work, and she seldom failed to appreciate merit when once she cast her eye upon it.

For the first twelve years of Elizabeth's rule, England was occupied in slowly settling down after the storms of the last two reigns. **Renewed peace and prosperity.** The English Church was gradually absorbing the moderate men from both the Protestant and the Romanist ranks. Quiet times were repairing the wealth of the land, and the restoration of the purity of the coinage, which was the queen's earliest care, had put trade once more on a healthy basis. Foreign war was easily avoided; in France Henry II. died ere Elizabeth had reigned a year, and his weak sons had occupation enough in their civil wars with the Huguenots. Philip of Spain was ere long to find a similar distraction, from the stirring of discontent among his much-persecuted Protestant subjects in the Netherlands.

The chief troubles of the period 1558-68 came from another quarter—the turbulent kingdom of Scotland. Elizabeth's natural heir was her cousin, Mary Stuart, the Queen of Scots, who represented the line of Henry VII.'s eldest daughter. Unless Elizabeth should marry and have issue, Mary stood next her in the line of succession. The Queen of Scots, however, was a most undesirable heiress. She had been brought up in France, had married the eldest son of Henry II. and hated England. She was a zealous Romanist, and ready to work hard for her faith. Moreover, she was greatly desirous of being recognized as Elizabeth's next of kin, and openly laid claim to the position. Though very young, she was clever and active, and possessed charms of person and manner which bent many men to her will.

Mary returned from France in 1561, having lost her husband, the young French king, after he had reigned but a single year.

The Scottish Reformation. She found Scotland, as usual, in a state of turmoil and violence. The Parliament had, in her absence, followed the example of England, by casting off the Roman yoke, and declaring Protestantism the religion of the land. But a strong party of Romanist lords refused obedience, and with them the queen allied herself on her arrival.

For the seven turbulent years of Mary's stay in Scotland, she was a grievous thorn in the side of Elizabeth. She was always laying claim to be acknowledged as heiress to the English crown, and her demand was secretly approved by the surviving Romanists to the south of the Tweed. Elizabeth replied by intriguing with the Protestant nobles of Scotland, and stirred up as much trouble as she could for her cousin, while outwardly professing the greatest love and esteem for her. The results of their machinations against each other were still uncertain, when Mary spoilt her own game by twice allowing her passion to overrule her judgment. She was fascinated by the handsome person of her first-cousin, Henry Lord Darnley,* and most unwisely married him, and made him king-consort. Darnley was a vicious, ill-conditioned young man, and soon made himself unbearable to his wife, by striving to get the royal power into his hands, and at the same time treating her with gross cruelty and neglect. His crowning offence was causing the assassination of Mary's private secretary, Rizzio, in her actual presence, under circumstances of the greatest brutality. After this, Mary completely lost her head. She lent her sanction to a plot for her husband's murder, framed by the Earl of Bothwell, a great lord of the Border. Bothwell slew the young king and blew up his residence with gunpowder, but disavowed the deed, and induced the queen to have him declared guiltless after a mock trial. Mary was well rid of her husband, and, her complicity in the plot not having been proved, she might have escaped the consequences of her crime but for a second fit of infatuation. She had become violently enamoured of the murderer Bothwell, and suffered him to carry her off to the castle of Dunbar, and there to marry her. No one now doubted her complicity in Darnley's murder, and the whole kingdom rose against her in righteous indignation. The army which Bothwell raised in her defence refused to strike a blow, and melted away when faced by the levies of the Protestant lords. The queen herself fell into their hands, was forced to

* James IV. = Margaret of England = Earl of Angus.

James V.

Margaret Countess of Lennox.

Mary Queen of Scots.

Henry Lord Darnley.

abdicate, and was condemned to lifelong prison in Lochleven Castle. In Mary's place, her young son by Darnley, James VI., was proclaimed as king, the regency being given by the Parliament to James, Earl of Murray, an illegitimate son of James V. (June, 1567).

Queen Mary being thus imprisoned and discredited, Elizabeth thought that her troubles on the side of Scotland were over, and closely allied herself with the Regent Murray. But the struggle was not yet ended. The Romanist party in Scotland saw that the new Protestant rulers of the country would crush their faith, and determined on a desperate rising in favour of their old religion and their old sovereign.

Mary escaped by night from Lochleven, and joined the insurgents. The Regent gave chase, and caught her army up at **Mary flees to** Langside, near Glasgow. The queen's friends were **England.** routed in the fight that followed, and she herself, riding hard out of the fray, fled for the English border. After a moment's hesitation, she resolved to throw herself on Elizabeth's mercy, rather than to face the almost certain death which awaited her at the hands of her son's adherents. There was no time to wait for any promise of safe conduct or shelter, and she arrived at Carlisle, unprotected by any engagement on the part of the Queen of England (May, 1568).

Elizabeth's most dangerous enemy had thus fallen into her hands, but the position was not much simplified by the fact. It **Mary confined** had to be decided whether the royal refugee should **in England.—** be allowed to proceed to France, as she herself **The Casket** wished; or handed over to the Scots, as the **Letters.** Regent Murray demanded; or kept in custody in England, as Elizabeth's self-interest seemed to require. To let her go to France would be generous, but dangerous; once arrived there, she would conspire with her cousins, the powerful family of Guise, against the peace of England. To send her back to Scotland would have some savour of legality about it, but would be equivalent to pronouncing her death-sentence; and from this Elizabeth shrank. To keep her captive in England seemed harsh, and even treacherous; for what right had one sovereign princess to imprison another? The politic Elizabeth resolved to take a cautious middle course. She protested to the Queen of Scots that she was willing to restore her to her throne, if she

found that the accusations which her subjects made against her were untrue. This was practically putting her guest upon her trial for the murder of Darnley; for when the Regent and the Scots lords were informed of the decision, they came forward to accuse their exiled mistress. They laid before Elizabeth's commission of inquiry the famous "Casket Letters," a series of documents which had passed between Mary and Bothwell. If genuine—and it seems almost certain that they were—they proved the guilt and infatuation of the Queen of Scots up to the hilt. Mary protested that they were forgeries, and her followers down to this day have believed her. But she refused to stand any trial; declared that she, a crowned queen and no subject of England, would never plead before English judges, and demanded leave to quit the realm. Satisfied with the effect on English and Scottish public opinion which the "Casket Letters" had produced, Elizabeth now took the decisive step of consigning Mary to close custody; thus practically treating her as a criminal, though no decision had been given against her (January, 1569).

For nearly twenty years the unfortunate Queen of Scots was doomed to spend a weary life, moved about from one manor or castle to another, under the care of guardians who were little better than gaolers. But she soon began to revenge herself. As long as she lived she was undoubtedly Elizabeth's heiress, if hereditary right counted for anything. Using this fact as her weapon, she began to intrigue with English malcontents. She offered her hand to the Duke of Norfolk, an ambitious young man, who was dazzled by the prospect of succeeding to Elizabeth's throne. She stirred up the Catholic lords of the North, by promising to restore the old faith if they would overthrow her cousin. But Elizabeth's ministers were wary and suspicious; Norfolk's designs were discovered, and he was cast into the Tower. The news of his imprisonment led to the immediate outbreak of the Northern Romanists; Thomas Percy, Earl of Northumberland, and Charles Neville, Earl of Westmoreland, raised their retainers, and made a dash on Tutbury, where Mary was confined, intending to rescue her and proclaim her as queen.

But the days of the Wars of the Roses were past; the retainers of the northern lords could do nothing against the royal power,

Romanist
intrigues in
Mary's favour.

and the "Rising in the North," as the plot was called, came to The "Rising in an ignominious end. The two earls failed to seize the North." the person of the Queen of Scots, and were easily driven away. They fled—the one to Scotland, the other to Spain,—and gave Elizabeth little further trouble. This was the last insurrection of the old feudal type in the pages of English history (October and November, 1569). Elizabeth showed herself more merciful than might have been expected to the plotters. Norfolk was released after a short captivity; the Queen of Scots suffered no further aggravation of her imprisonment. For this she gave her cousin small thanks, and without delay recommenced plotting to secure her liberty.

Meanwhile the aspect of affairs on the Continent was beginning to engage more and more of Elizabeth's attention. By this Religious wars time civil wars were alight both in France and in in Europe. the Netherlands. The French Protestants, or Huguenots, as they were called, had taken arms to secure themselves toleration as early as 1562. The Protestants of the Netherlands, after long suffering under the grinding tyranny of Philip of Spain and the Inquisition, had been driven to revolt in 1568. In both countries the insurgents appealed for help to Elizabeth; they implored the queen to save them from the triumph of popery, and pointed out that if they themselves failed, the victorious Romanists would inevitably turn against England, the only power in Western Europe which denied the Pope's supremacy. They might have added that the Queen of Scots was closely allied with the Guises, the heads of the Catholic party in France, and that she was also intriguing for the aid of Philip of Spain.

In her dealings with the Continental Protestants Elizabeth showed herself at her worst. Vacillation and selfishness Elizabeth's marked her actions from first to last. She felt foreign policy. that the civil wars kept France and Spain from being dangerous to her. She knew also that if they ended in the suppression of the rebels, England would be in grave danger. But she hated rebellion, she could not understand religious enthusiasm, and she detested the violent Calvinism which both the Huguenots and the Netherlanders professed. All wars too, she knew, were expensive, and their issues doubtful. Hence it came that she displayed a reluctance to commit herself

to one side or the other, which involved her in much double-dealing and even treachery. She refused to declare war either on Philip of Spain or on Charles of France, and allowed their ministers to remain at her court. But she several times sent the Huguenots help, both secretly and openly, and she allowed the Netherland Protestants to take shelter in England, and recruit themselves in her ports. She made no effort to prevent hundreds of English volunteers passing the Channel to aid the insurgents. For if the queen had doubts as to taking her side, the people had none; they sympathized heartily with the Huguenots and the Netherlanders, and did all that private persons could to bring them succour.

Yet Elizabeth refused to assume the position of the champion of Protestantism, even when the inducement to do so became more pressing. In 1570 Pope Pius V. **The Bull of Deposition.** formally excommunicated her, and declared her deposed, and her kingdom transferred to her cousin Mary. This declaration turned all the more violent and fanatical Romanists into potential traitors; if they believed in their Pope's decision, they were bound to regard Elizabeth as a bastard and a usurper, and to look upon Mary as the true queen. Most of the English Catholics steadily refused to take up this position, and remained loyal in spite of the many vexations to which their religion exposed them. But a violent minority accepted the papal decree, and spent their time in scheming to depose or even to murder their sovereign. The knowledge of their designs made Elizabeth doubly cautious and wary, but did not drive her into a crusade against Catholicism. Her Parliament, however, passed bills, making the introduction of papal bulls into the realm, as also the perversion of members of the Church of England to Romanism, high treason. But no attempt was made to save the Continental Protestants from their oppressors, or to put England at the head of a league against the Pope.

Meanwhile, the Bull of Deposition bore its first-fruits in a new conspiracy of the English Romanists, generally known as the "Ridolfi Plot," from the name of an Italian **The Ridolfi Plot.** banker, who served as the go-between of the English malcontents and the King of Spain. The Duke of Norfolk, ungrateful for his pardon two years before, took the lead in the conspiracy, undertaking to seize or even to murder Elizabeth,

and then to marry the Queen of Scots. Philip of Spain promised Norfolk's agent, Ridolfi, that the duke should have the aid of Spanish troops the moment that he took arms. But the plan came to Cecil's ears, some of Norfolk's papers fell into the minister's power, and he was able to lay his hands on all concerned in the plot. Norfolk lost his head, as he well deserved, and it was expected that the Queen of Scots would share his fate. But though the nation and the Parliament clamoured for Mary's blood, Elizabeth refused to touch her; she was left unharmed in her captivity. Nor did the queen declare war on Spain, though there was the clearest proof that Philip had been implicated in the plot. Her only wish seems to have been to put off the crisis as long as possible.

If her own danger could not tempt Elizabeth to interfere in Continental affairs, it was not likely that anything else would make her take up the sword. Not even the fearful Massacre of St. Bartholomew provoked her to take up arms against the Catholics—though on that one night the weak King of France, egged on by his wicked mother and brother, ordered the slaughter of 20,000 Protestants who had come up to Paris, relying on his good will and promised patronage (1572). Elizabeth stormed at the treacherous French court, but made no attempt to aid the surviving Huguenots in their gallant struggle against their persecutors. So great was her determination to keep the peace, that she even offered to mediate between Philip of Spain and the revolted provinces of the Low Countries, though it is fair to add that she—perhaps designedly—proposed conditions to them which it was unlikely that either would accept.

It was fortunate for England that both the Huguenots in France and the Dutch in the North displayed a far greater power of resistance than might have been expected. The former held their own, and even forced King Charles to come to terms and grant them toleration. The latter, though reduced to great straits, persevered to the end under their wise leader, William, Prince of Orange, and beat back the terrible Duke of Alva, King Philip's best general, from the walls of Alkmaar, when their fortunes seemed at the lowest (1573). Next year they forced Alva's successor, Requesens, to retire from Holland, after the gallant defence and relief of Leyden (October, 1574).

Progress of the
struggle
abroad.

Elizabeth, therefore, escaped the danger that the triumph of the King of Spain and the Catholic party in France would have brought upon her, though her safety came from no merit of her own. It was not till ten years more had passed that she was finally forced to draw the sword and fight for her life and crown. Meanwhile, it cannot be denied that her cautious and selfish policy did much for the material prosperity of England. In twenty years of peace the one country of Western Europe which enjoyed quiet and good government was bound to profit at the expense of its unfortunate neighbours. England became a land of refuge to all the Continental Protestants: to her shores the artisans of France transferred their industries, and the merchants of Antwerp their hoarded wealth. The new settlers were kindly received, as men persecuted in behalf of the true faith, and became good citizens of their adopted country. But most of all did the maritime trade of England prosper. Her seamen got the advantage that comes to the neutral flag in time of war, and began to take into their hands the commerce that had once been the staple of the Hanseatic Towns, the French ocean ports, and the cities of the much-vexed Low Countries. English ships had seldom been seen in earlier days beyond Hamburg or Lisbon, but now they began to push into the Baltic, to follow the Mediterranean as far as Turkey, and even to navigate the wild Arctic Ocean, as far as the ports of Northern Russia.

Commercial
and maritime
gains of Eng-
land.

But the attention of the English seamen was directed most of all to the West, whither the reports of the vast wealth of America drew adventurous spirits as with a magnet. The gold which the Spaniards had plundered from the ancient empires of Mexico and Peru dazzled the eyes of all men, and the English seamen hoped to find some similar hoard on every barren shore from Newfoundland to Patagonia. But the Spaniards arrogated to themselves the sole right to America and its trade, basing their claim on a preposterous grant made them by Alexander VI., the notorious Borgia Pope. They treated all adventurers who pushed into the Western waters not only as intruders, but as pirates. Sir John Hawkins, the pioneer of English trade to America, was always coming into collision with them (1562-64). That more famous sea-captain, Sir Francis Drake, a cousin of Hawkins, spent most

Exploration in
the West.—
Hawkins—
Drake—Fro-
bisher.

of his time in bickering in a somewhat piratical way with the Spanish authorities beyond the ocean. His second voyage to the West was a great landmark in English naval history. Starting in 1577 with the secret connivance of Elizabeth, he sailed round Cape Horn and up the coasts of Chili and Peru, capturing numberless Spanish ships, and often sacking a wealthy port. His greatest achievement was the seizing of the great Lima galleon, which was taking home to King Philip the annual instalment of American treasure—a sum of no less than £500,000. After making this splendid booty, Drake reached England by crossing the Pacific and Indian Oceans, and rounding the Cape of Good Hope, thus making the first circumnavigation of the globe which an Englishman had accomplished. While Drake was gathering treasure in South America, other seamen pushed northward, endeavouring to find the “North-West Passage”—a navigable route which was supposed to exist round the northern shore of North America. There Frobisher discovered Labrador and Hudson’s Bay, but brought back little profit from his adventures in the frozen Arctic seas.

While the emissaries of England were invading the Spanish waters, England herself was suffering from another kind of Jesuit intrigues. invasion at the hands of the friends of the King of Spain. Since the bull of 1570, Elizabeth was considered fair game by every fanatical Romanist on the Continent. Accordingly, there began to land in England many secret missionaries of the old faith, generally exiled Englishmen trained abroad in the “English colleges” at Rheims and Douay, where the banished Catholics mustered strongest. It was their aim not only to keep wavering Romanists in their faith, but to organize them in a secret conspiracy against the queen. They taught that all was permissible in dealing with heretics; their disciples were to feign loyalty, and even conformity with the English Church, but were to be ready to take up arms whenever the signal was given from the Continent. These Jesuits and seminary priests constituted a very serious danger, but they did not escape the eyes of Walsingham and Burleigh, Elizabeth’s watchful ministers. Their plans were discovered, and several were caught and hung; yet the conspiracy went on, and was soon to take shape in overt action.

Its first working was seen in “Throckmorton’s Plot,” a widely

spread scheme for an attack on England by all the Catholic powers combined (1583). The Duke of Guise prepared an army in France, the King of Spain another in the Netherlands, which were to unite for an invasion. Meanwhile, the English Romanists were to rise in favour of the Queen of Scots, and welcome the foreign armies. Throckmorton and a few more fanatics undertook to make the whole plan easier by assassinating the queen. But Walsingham's spies got scent of the matter, Throckmorton was caught and executed, and Elizabeth, convinced at last that dallying with Spain was no longer possible, dismissed King Philip's ambassador, and prepared for open war (1584).

Throckmorton's Plot.—
War with Spain declared.

The struggle which had so long been fought out by intrigue and unauthorized buccaneering, was now to be settled by honest hard fighting. It proved perilous enough, but far less formidable than the cautious queen had feared.

Leicester's expedition to Holland.

Elizabeth was at last forced to lend open aid to the Protestants of the Continent, and 7000 men, under her favourite, the Earl of Leicester, sailed for Holland to aid the Dutch against King Philip. They won no great battles, but their presence was invaluable to the Netherlanders, who had begun to despair when their great leader, William of Orange, had been assassinated by a fanatic hired by Spanish gold. Leicester was an incapable general, but his men fought well, and learnt to despise the Spaniards. Even a defeat which they suffered at Zutphen encouraged them, for 500 English there made head against the whole Spanish army, and retired without great harm, though they lost Sir Philip Sidney, the most popular and accomplished young gentleman in England, well known as the author of a curious pastoral romance called "The Arcadia" (1586).

Far more important than the fighting in the Netherlands were the maritime exploits of the English seamen. The moment that they were let loose upon the Spaniards they asserted a clear supremacy at sea. Drake took and sacked Vigo, a great port of Northern Spain, and then, crossing the Atlantic, captured the chief cities of the West Indies and the Spanish main—St. Iago, Cartagena, and St. Domingo (1586).

English successes at sea.

Meanwhile, Mary Queen of Scots was playing her last stake.

From her prison she made over to King Philip her rights to the throne of England, and besought him to despatch his armies to rescue her. But she also gave her approval to one more assassination-plot hatched by the English Catholics. Instigated by a Jesuit priest named Ballard, Anthony Babington, a gentleman of Derbyshire, and a handful of his friends agreed to murder Elizabeth in her own palace. But there were spies of the lynx-eyed Walsingham among the conspirators, and when the Queen of Scots and the would-be murderers were just prepared to strike, hands were laid upon them. Babington and his friends were executed, but this was not enough to appease the cry for blood which arose from the whole nation when the conspiracy was divulged. Urged on by her ministers, Elizabeth at last allowed the Queen of Scots to be put on her trial for this, the fourth attempt to strike down her cousin. Mary was tried by a commission of peers, and clearly convicted, not only of encouraging a Catholic rising and a Spanish invasion, but of having approved Babington's murderous plan. She was found guilty (October 25, 1586), and the Parliament, which met soon after, besought the queen to have her beheaded without delay.

But Elizabeth still hesitated. She hated Mary, but her high ideas of royal prerogative made her shrink from slaying a sovereign princess, and she still dreaded the explosion of wrath which she knew must follow all over Catholic Europe. The young King of Scotland might resent his mother's execution, and the Guises in France would never pardon their cousin's death. She lingered for more than three months before she would issue Mary's death-warrant ; but at last she gave the fatal signature. Her ministers at once caused the warrant to be carried out, without allowing their mistress time to repent. The Queen of Scots was executed in her prison at Fotheringay Castle. She died with great dignity and courage, asserting on the scaffold that she was a martyr for her religion, not a criminal. Many both in her own day and since have believed her words, but it is impossible to read her story through from first to last, and then to conclude that she was only the victim of circumstances and the prey of unscrupulous enemies. Though much sinned against, she was far more the worker of her own undoing (February 8, 1587).

Elizabeth expressed great wrath against her ministers for hurrying on the execution. She fined and imprisoned Davison, the Secretary of State, who had sent off Mary's death-warrant, and pretended that she had wished to pardon her. Perhaps her anger was real, but no one save the unfortunate Davison took it very seriously. The people felt nothing but satisfaction and relief, and rejoiced that there was no longer a Catholic heiress to trouble the realm. The King of Scots contented himself with a formal protest, and the Guises in France were too busy in their civil wars with King Henry III. and the Huguenots to think of assailing England.

Only Philip of Spain, who accepted in sober earnest the legacy of her rights which Mary had left him, took up the task of revenge, and he had already so many causes to hate Elizabeth, that he did not need this additional provocation to spur him on to attack her. He had already begun to prepare for a great naval expedition against England. All through the spring and summer of 1587 the ports of Spain, Portugal, Naples, and Sicily, were busy in manning and equipping every war-ship that the king could get together. The Duke of Parma, the Spanish viceroy in the Netherlands, was also directed to draw off every man that could be spared from the Dutch War, and to be ready to lead them across the Channel the moment that the king's fleet should have secured the Straits of Dover.

*The Spanish
Armada.*

But the great flotilla, the *Invincible Armada*, as the Spaniards called it, was long in sailing. Ere it was ready, Drake made a bold descent on Cadiz, and burnt no less than 10,000 tons of shipping which lay in its harbour. He called this exploit "singeing the King of Spain's beard." This disaster caused so much delay that the expedition had to be put off till the next year.

In the spring of 1588, however, the Armada was at last ready to start. It comprised 130 vessels, half of which were great "galleons" of the largest size that were known to the sixteenth century, and carried 8000 seamen and nearly 20,000 soldiers. But the crews were raw, the ships were ill-found and ill-provisioned, and, what was most fatal of all, the admiral, the Duke of Medina Sidonia, was a mere fair-weather sailor, who hardly knew a mast from an anchor. It may be added that the vessels were overcrowded with the 20,000 soldiers whom they bore, and for the

most part were armed with fewer and smaller cannons than their great bulk would have been able to carry.

Nevertheless, the Armada was an imposing force, and in strong hands ought to have achieved success. For Elizabeth had a very small permanent royal navy, and had to rely for the defence of her realm mainly on privateers and merchantmen hastily equipped for war service. Moreover, her parsimony had depleted the royal arsenals to such an extent, that in provisioning and arming their fleet the English were at much the same disadvantage as their enemies. But, unlike the Spaniards, they had excellent crews, and were led by old captains who had learnt their trade in long years of exploring and buccaneering across the Atlantic—men like Drake, Hawkins, Frobisher, and others whose names we have no space to mention. The command of the whole was given to Lord Howard of Effingham, a capable and cautious officer, who showed himself worthy of the queen's confidence—confidence that appeared all the more striking because he was suspected by many to be a Roman Catholic. In the mere number of ships the English fleet which mustered at Plymouth somewhat exceeded the Armada, but in size the individual vessels were far smaller than the Spanish galleons. But they were much more seaworthy, and were armed so heavily with artillery that it was found that an English ship could throw a broadside of the same weight of metal as a Spaniard of almost double its size.

The Armada left Corunna, the northernmost port of Spain, on July 22, and appeared off the Lizard on July 28. On the news of its approach, the English fleet put out of Plymouth, and the beacons summoned the militia to arms all over the land from Berwick to Penzance. The Duke of Medina Sidonia had resolved not to fight the English at once, but to pass up the Channel to the Dover Straits, and get into communication with his colleague Parma in Flanders, before engaging in a decisive battle. This unwise resolve gave the English a splendid opportunity. As the Armada slowly rolled eastward, it was beset on all sides by Lord Howard's lighter fleet, and for a whole week was battered and hustled along without being able to induce the enemy to close. The great galleons were so slow and unwieldy, that they could not come up with the English, who sailed around and about

Comparison of
Spanish and
English fleets.

Defeat and dis-
persal of the
Armada.

them, plying them with distant but effective artillery fire, and cutting off every vessel which was disabled or fell behind. By the time that the Spaniards reached Calais, they were thoroughly demoralized; they had lost comparatively few ships, but every one of the fleet was more or less shattered by shot, and the crews had suffered terribly from the cannonade. At Calais Medina Sidonia received the unwelcome news that Parma could not join him. A Dutch fleet was blockading the Flemish ports, and the viceroy was unable to get his transports out to sea. Thus brought to a check, the duke moored his fleet off Calais, to pause a moment and recruit (August 6). But that night the English sent fire-ships among his crowded vessels, and to escape them the Spaniards had to put off hastily in the darkness. This manœuvre proved fatal. Some vessels ran ashore on the French coast, others were burnt, others cut off by the enemy. A final engagement, on August 8-9, so shattered the fleet that Medina Sidonia lost heart, and fled away into the German Ocean, before a strong gale from the south which had sprung up. His vessels were dispersed, and each made its way out of the fight as best it could. Some were taken, many driven on to the Dutch coast, the rest passed out of sight of England, steering northward before the gale.

Lord Howard's fleet was therefore able to sail victorious into the Thames, and report the rout of the enemy. It was none too soon, for the English ammunition was well-nigh exhausted after ten days' continuous fighting. They were welcomed by the queen, who had gathered a great force of militia at Tilbury, in Essex, to fight Parma, if he should succeed in crossing. Elizabeth had behaved splendidly during the crisis; she had organized a strong army, and put herself at its head, inspiring every man by the cheerful and resolute spirit which she displayed. Even had the Armada swept away the English fleet, it is unlikely that Parma would have been successful against the numerous and enthusiastic levies which were ready to fight him.

But the Armada was now a thing of naught. Forced to return round the north of Scotland, it was utterly shattered in the unknown seas of the West. The cliffs of the Orkneys, the Hebrides, Connaught, and Kerry, were strewn with the wrecks of Spanish galleons, and only 53 ships out of the 130 that had started straggled back to the ports of northern Spain.

The great crisis of the century was now past ; queen and nation had been true to themselves and to each other, and the days of plots and invasions were over. For the future, Elizabeth could not only sleep secure of life and crown, but could feel that she might pose as the arbitress of Western Europe, since the domination of Spain was at an end.

But she was now too far gone in years—she had attained the age of fifty-six—to be able to start on a new and vigorous line of policy. Her old passion for caution and intrigue could not be shaken off, though they were no longer necessary. Hence it came to pass that, though England was strong, healthy, wealthy, and vigorous, she did not take up the dominant position that might have been expected. The queen persisted in her old policy of helping the Continental Protestants only by meagre doles of money, and small detachments of troops. By a vigorous effort she might have thrust the Spaniards completely out of the Low Countries, or enabled the Huguenots to make themselves supreme in France. But she refused to fit out any great expeditions ; the expense appalled her parsimonious soul, and she dreaded the chances of war. Hence it came that in the Low Countries the Dutch established their independence in the “Seven United Provinces,” but Spain continued to hold Belgium. Hence, too, French parties were condemned to six years more of civil war, which only ended when Henry of Navarre, the Protestant heir to the throne of France, abjured his religion in order to get accepted by the Catholics. “Paris is well worth a Mass,” he cynically observed, and swore all that was required of him (1593). But he granted the Huguenots complete peace and toleration by the celebrated *Edict of Nantes*, and put an end to the civil war which had devastated his unhappy land for thirty years.

The chief efforts of Elizabeth’s foreign policy during the last fifteen years of her reign were naval expeditions against the Spaniards. They caused King Philip much loss and much vexation of spirit, but they did not inflict any very crushing blow on him. The queen would never spend enough money on them, and generally allowed her subjects to carry on the war with squadrons of privateers. But the English adventurers very naturally sought plunder rather than solid political advantages—a fact which

Half-hearted
foreign policy
of Elizabeth.

Naval war
with Spain
continued.

accounts for their failure to do anything great. A considerable expedition sent out in 1589 sacked Corunna and Vigo, but failed in an attempt to set upon the Portuguese throne a pretender hostile to King Philip. This was followed by a series of smaller expeditions to South America and the West Indies, in which Drake, and a younger adventurer, Sir Walter Raleigh, Elizabeth's favourite courtier, did Spain considerable harm, but England no great good. A larger armament sailed in 1596 against Cadiz, under the Earl of Essex and Lord Howard of Effingham. This force took the town, and destroyed Spain's largest naval arsenal and a great part of her fleet: a mere naval expedition could do no more.

These successive blows at Spain gave England the complete command of the seas. Hence it is not strange that we find the beginnings of colonial enterprise appearing. An attempt to found a settlement on the bleak shore of Newfoundland was a failure. But Sir Walter Raleigh planted a promising colony in the more clement district about the river Roanoke, which he named *Virginia*, after his mistress, the "Virgin-Queen," as she loved to be called. The first Virginian scheme came to naught—the Indians were hostile, and the improvident settlers planted tobacco instead of corn, and so starved themselves (1590). It was not till seventeen years later that the colony was founded for the second time, and began to flourish. It was from thence that Raleigh brought to England the two products that are always connected with his name, tobacco and potatoes.

Colonial enterprise.—Raleigh in Virginia.

Colonial enterprise was accompanied by increased trade with distant lands. The English ships began to appear as far afield as India, China, and even Japan. The merchants who worked the more difficult and dangerous routes, banded themselves into chartered companies, of which the Turkey Company, founded in 1581, the Russian Company, dating from 1566, and the far more famous East India Company (1600) were the most important. By the end of the queen's reign, English commerce had doubled and tripled, and the steady stream of wealth which it poured into the land had done much to end the social troubles and dangers which had marked the middle years of the century.

Growth of foreign trade.—Chartered companies.

But nearly all the profit went to the town populations. Ports

and markets flourished, merchants and skilled artisans grew rich, and a certain proportion of the wretched **Rural distress.** vagrant hordes, which had been the terror of the middle years of the century, were absorbed into the new employments which were springing up in the towns. But in the country-side, neither the landholder nor the peasant had nearly such a good position as in the days before the Reformation. The prices both of food and of manufactured goods had gone up about threefold, but rents had not risen perceptibly, and the wages of agricultural labour had only increased about 50 per cent. The country gentleman, therefore, was no longer so opulent in comparison to the town-dwelling merchant, and the peasant stood far worse compared with the artisan than in the previous century. We may place in the time of Elizabeth the beginning of that rise of the importance of the urban as compared with the rural population, which has been going on ever since, till, in our own day, England is entirely dominated by her towns. It will be noticed that in the great political struggle of the next century, under the Stuarts, the party which represented the wealth and activity of the cities completely beat that which drew its strength from the peerage and gentry of the purely agricultural districts.

It would be wrong to leave the field of social change without mentioning the celebrated Poor Law of Queen Elizabeth (1601).

The Poor Law. All attempts to cope with pauperism by voluntary charity having failed, it was finally resolved to make the maintenance of the aged and invalid poor a statutory burden on the parishes. The new law provided that the able-bodied vagrant should be forced to work, and, if he refused, should be imprisoned, but that the impotent and deserving should be fed and housed by overseers, who were authorized to levy rates on the parish for their support. The system seems to have worked well, and we hear no complaints on the subject for three or four generations.

It is most noteworthy to mark the way in which the expansion of England in the spheres of political and commercial greatness was accompanied by a corresponding growth in the realms of intellect. The second half of Elizabeth's reign, a mere period of twenty years, was more fertile in great literary names than the two whole centuries

**Growth of
poetry and
philosophy.**

which had preceded it. The excitement of the long religious wars, the sudden opening up of the dark places of the world by the great explorers, the free spirit of individual inquiry which accompanied the growth of Protestantism, all conspired to stir and develop men's minds. The greatest English dramatist, William Shakespeare, born in 1564, and the greatest English philosopher, Francis Bacon, born in 1561, were both children of the days of the long struggle with Spain, and had watched the final crisis of the Armada in their early manhood. Edmund Spenser, a few years older than his mightier contemporaries, shows even more clearly the spirit of the times. All through his lengthy epic of the *Faërie Queene* he is inspired by the enthusiasm of the struggles of England, and tells in allegory the glories of the great Elizabeth. We have but space to allude to Sir Philip Sydney and his pastoral romances, to Hooker's works on political philosophy, to Marlowe and other dramatists whose fame is half eclipsed by Shakespeare's genius. Never before or since has England produced in a few short years such a crop of great literary names.

The two main subjects of domestic importance in the last years of Elizabeth were the development of fresh forms of division in the English Church, and the troubles caused by the new conquest of Ireland. Both of these movements had begun in the earlier years of the reign, but did not fully expand till its end.

Elizabeth's chief problem in matters religious had for thirty years been that of dealing with the Roman Catholics. But after the death of Mary of Scotland and the defeat of the Armada this question retired somewhat into the background. The vast majority of the Roman-ists had conformed to the Anglican Church; of the remainder many were loyal, and were therefore tacitly left unharmed by the Government, save when they came into conflict with the Recusancy Laws, as the acts directed against them were called. The small but violent minority who listened to the Jesuits, and were still plotting against the queen, were, on the other hand, treated with the most vehement harshness. At one time and another, a very considerable number of them came to the gallows, though always, as Elizabeth was careful to explain, not as Papists, but as traitors. They were so hated by the nation, who identified

Dangers from
the Romanists
at an end.

them with nothing but assassination plots and intrigues with Spain, that they no longer constituted any danger.

But a new religious problem was growing up. Many of the Protestants who had conformed to the English Church system in

Rise of Puritanism.

Elizabeth's earlier years were growing out of touch with the National Establishment. Constant intercourse with the Huguenots and the Dutch, both of whom professed violent forms of Calvinism, had made them discontented with the ritual and organization of the English Church. Like their Continental friends, they came to hate bishops and canons, vestments and ritual, even things that seem to us parts of the common decencies of church service, such as the surplice in the reading-desk, the usage of kneeling at Holy Communion, the employment of the ring in marriage, and the sign of the cross at baptism. All these remnants of common Christian practice they considered to be "rags of Popery," vain survivals of the old Romanist days. And since they wished to sweep everything away, they were called in derision "Puritans," in allusion to their constant citation of "the pure Gospel."

Elizabeth detested the Puritan habit of mind. She loved decency and order, and she liked the pomp and splendour of the old church services; indeed, she would have

Harsh treatment of the Puritans.

gladly kept much that the Anglican Establishment has rejected. She was proud of her position as head and defender of the national Church, and looked upon the bishops as high and important state officials under her. The Puritan desire to abolish the episcopate, to do away with all ritual, to whitewash the churches and break down all their ornaments, seemed to her to savour of anarchic republicanism and rank disloyalty. She was determined that the Puritan, no less than the Romanist, should suffer if he refused to conform to the usages of the national Church. Hence it came that she dealt very hardly with the Puritans, suppressing their religious meetings for "prophesying"—as they called extempore preaching—and treating their pamphlets as seditious. One very scurrilous set of tracts, issued under the name of *Martin Mar-prelate*, provoked her wrath so much that John Penry, who was responsible for them, was actually hung for treasonable libel. Puritans who kept quiet did not suffer, any more than the Romanists who kept quiet, but those who resisted the queen were treated with a rigour that

showed that the day of freedom of conscience was still far away. The discontented admirers of Calvinism still kept within the Church of England,—it was their ambition to change its doctrine, not to quit it; but already in Elizabeth's reign it was obvious that schism between the moderate and the violent parties was inevitable.

The most miserable and melancholy page of the history of Elizabeth's reign is that which is covered by the records of Ireland. We have already mentioned how Henry VIII. had extended the English influence beyond the borders of "the Pale," and done something towards subduing the whole island to obedience. But the most important share of the work was reserved for Elizabeth. Her intent was shown by her Act of 1569, for dividing the whole land into shires, to be ruled by sheriffs on the English plan—a device for destroying the patriarchal authority of the tribal chiefs, who from time immemorial had governed their clans according to old Celtic law. It was not to be expected that any such scheme could be carried out without causing friction with the natives. They were wholly unaccustomed to obey or respect the royal mandate, and acknowledged no authority higher than that of their own chief: English laws and English manners were alike hateful to them. In many districts they were little better than savages; the "wild Irish," as the more uncivilized tribes were called, dwelt in low huts of mud, wore no shoes or head-gear, and were clothed only in a rough kilt and mantle of frieze. They wore their hair long over neck and eyes, went everywhere armed to the teeth, and looked on tribal war and plundering as the sole serious business of life.

To teach such a race to live under the strict English law was an almost impossible task, requiring the utmost patience, and Elizabeth's ministers and officials were not patient. When the chiefs withstood their orders, they declared them traitors, confiscated the lands of whole tribes, and attempted to settle up the annexed districts with English colonists. This, of course, drove the Irish to desperation, and the incomers were soon slain or driven away. In return, the Lord-Deputy of Ireland or one of the "Presidents" of its four provinces would march against the rebels, slay every male person they met, armed or unarmed, and leave the women and children to

Irish policy
of Elizabeth.

Resistance of
the Irish clans.

starve. In this ruthless, devastating war, whole counties were depopulated and left waste, a few survivors only escaping into woods, bogs, or mountains. The worst feature of the struggle was the cruel double-dealing employed against the Irish chiefs; they were often induced to surrender by false promises of pardon, they were caught and slain by treachery, sometimes they were even poisoned. The intractable nature of the rebels explains, but does not excuse, the conduct of the English rulers. The Irish would never keep an oath or observe a peace; they plundered and murdered whenever the Lord-Deputy's eye was not on them, and they were always trying to get aid from Spain.

At first the struggle between English and Irish was purely a matter of race, but the religious element was soon introduced.

The conflict
partly a
religious one.

Protestantism made no head in the country, and in 1579 a Papal Legate, Nicholas Sanders, came over to organize the tribes to unite in defence of the old religion. No man could ever persuade Irish parties to join for long, and Sanders's mission was in that respect a failure. But for the future the war was embittered by religious as well as racial hatred. In 1580 the Pope sent over a body of Italian and Spanish mercenaries to aid the rebels; but this force was blockaded by Lord Grey in its camp at Smerwick, a harbour in Kerry, and every man was put to the sword. At a later date Philip of Spain sent similar and equally ineffective help.

The two chief struggles of the Irish against the establishment of the English rule were that of the tribes of Munster in 1578-

Desmond's
Rebellion.

83, and that of the tribes of Ulster in 1595-1601. The former was led by Garrett Fitzgerald, Earl of Desmond, the greatest lord of the South, the descendant of one of those Anglo-Norman families which had become more Irish than the Irish themselves. In his desperate struggle with Lord-Deputy Grey and the English colonists in Munster, he saw all the land from Galway to Waterford harried into a wilderness, and was killed at last as a fugitive in the hills.

The Ulster rebellion of Hugh O'Neil, Earl of Tyrone, the head of the greatest of the native Irish septs, was far more formidable

Tyrone's
Rebellion.-
Expedition
of Essex.

than that of the Fitzgeralds. The English could for a long time do nothing against him. In 1598 he defeated an army of 5000 men on the Black-water and slew its leader, Sir Henry Bagenal, and most of his

followers. Tyrone sent for aid to Spain, and so moved Queen Elizabeth's fears that she despatched against him the largest English force that ever went over-sea in her reign. An army of 20,000 men was placed under Robert Devereux, the young Earl of Essex, whom the queen loved most of all men in her later years, and sent over to Dublin. Essex, though he had won much credit for courage in Holland, and at the capture of Cadiz, was not a great general. He pacified Central and Southern Ireland, but did not succeed in crushing Tyrone. It would seem that he was disgusted at the cruelty and treachery of his predecessors in the government of Ireland, and wished to admit the rebels to submission on easy terms. At any rate, he made a truce with Tyrone in 1600, promising that the queen should grant him toleration in matters of religion, and leave him his earldom. Essex returned to England to get these terms ratified, but was received very coldly by his mistress and her council, who had sent him to Ireland to suppress, not to condone, the rebellion. His treaty was not confirmed, and the war with Tyrone went on. The earl got 7000 men from Spain, and ravaged all Central Ireland, till he was defeated by Lord Montjoy in an attempt to raise the siege of Kinsale (1601). In the next year he made complete submission to the queen, and was pardoned and given back most of his Ulster lands. But the eight years of war had made Northern Ireland a desert, and the power of the O'Neils was almost broken.

Meanwhile the short stay of Essex in Ireland had led to a strange tragedy in London. The young earl had been so much favoured by the queen in earlier years, that he could not brook the rebuke that fell upon him for his dealings with Tyrone. Presuming on the almost doting fondness which his sovereign had shown for him, the headstrong young man plunged into seditious courses. He swore that his enemies in the council had calumniated him to the queen, and that he would be revenged on them and drive them out of office. With this object he gathered many of the Puritan party about him—for he was a strong Protestant—and resolved to overturn the ministry by force. He caught the Lord Chancellor, and locked him up, and then sallied out armed into the streets of London with a band of his friends, calling on the people to rise and deliver the queen from false councillors.

*Intrigues and
execution of
Essex.*

But he had counted too much on his popularity ; no one joined him, and he was apprehended and put in prison.

Elizabeth was much enraged with her former favourite, and allowed his enemies to persuade her into permitting him to be tried and executed for treason. When he was dead she bitterly regretted him (February, 1601).

The great queen was now near her end. All her contemporaries, both friends and foes, had passed away already. Philip of Spain had died, a prey to religious melancholy, and racked by a loathsome disease, in 1598. That same year saw the end of the great minister, William Cecil, Lord Burleigh. His colleague Walsingham had sunk into the grave some years earlier, in 1590. Leicester, whom the queen had loved till his death-day, had perished of a fever in 1588, the year of the Armada. A younger generation had arisen, which only knew Elizabeth as an old woman, and forgot her brilliant youth. To them the vivacity and love of pleasure which she displayed on the verge of her seventieth year seemed abnormal and even unseemly.

To the last she kept her talent for dealing with men. There was no greater instance of her cleverness shown in all her life than her management of her Parliament in 1601. **"Monopolies"** declared illegal. The Commons had been growing more resolute and strong-willed as the queen grew older, and though Elizabeth often chid them, and sometimes even imprisoned members who displeased her, yet she knew when to yield with a good grace. The Parliament of 1601 was raging against "monopolies"—grants under the royal seal to individuals, permitting them to be the sole vendors or manufacturers of certain articles of trade. Seeing their resolution, Elizabeth came down in person to the House, and addressed the members at length, so cleverly that she persuaded them that she was as much opposed to the abuse as they themselves, and won enormous applause when she announced that all monopolies were at once to be withdrawn and made illegal.

Eighteen months after this strange scene Elizabeth died, in her seventy-first year. On her death-bed she assented to the designation of James of Scotland as her successor—a thing she would never suffer before, for she held that "an expectant heir is like a coffin always in sight."

**Last years of
Elizabeth.**

**Death of
Elizabeth.**

In spite of the many unamiable points in her character, Elizabeth was always liked by her subjects, and well deserved their liking. She had guided England through forty-five most troublous years, and left her subjects wealthy, prosperous, and contented. Her failures had always been upon the side of caution, and such mistakes are the easiest to repair and the soonest forgotten. Both in her own day and in ages to come, she received the credit for all the progress and prosperity of her reign. The nation, groaning under the un- wisdom of the Stuarts, cried in vain for a renewal of "the days of good Queen Bess." The modern historian, when he recounts the great deeds of the Englishmen of the latter half of the sixteenth century, invariably speaks of the "Elizabethan age." Nor is this wrong. When we reflect on the evils which a less capable sovereign might have brought upon the realm in that time of storm and stress, we may well give her due meed of thanks to the cautious, politic, unscrupulous queen, who left such peace and prosperity behind her.

The Eliza-
bethan age.

CHAPTER XXV.

JAMES I.

1603-1625.

WITH the death of Elizabeth the greatness of England departed. From 1603 to 1688 she counted for little in the Councils of Europe, save indeed during the ten years of Cromwell's rule. She became the tool of foreign powers, sometimes because her rulers were duped, sometimes because they deliberately sold themselves to the stranger.

James of Scotland, the old queen's legitimate heir, was a man of thirty-seven when the throne fell to him. He had lived an unhappy life in his northern realm, buffeted to and fro by unruly nobles and domineering ministers of the Scottish Kirk. But most of his troubles had been the results of his own failings. Of all the kings who ever ruled these realms, he is almost the only one of whom it can be said that he was a coward. From this vice sprang his other defects. Like all cowards, he was suspicious, capable of any cruelty against those whom he dreaded, prone always to lean on some stronger man, who would bear his responsibility for him. He chose these favourites with the rankest folly: Arran and Lennox, who were the minions of his youth while yet he reigned in Scotland alone, and Rochester and Buckingham, who ruled his riper age, were—all four—arrogant, vicious, scheming adventurers. They had nothing to recommend them save a handsome person and a fluent and flattering tongue. Each in his turn domineered over his doting master, and made himself a byword for insolence and self-seeking.

James was unfortunate in his outer man. He was ill-made, corpulent, and weak-kneed; though his face was not unpleasing, his speech was marred by a tongue too large for his mouth. But he was grossly and ridiculously vain and conceited. He

possessed a certain cleverness of a limited kind, and he was well versed in book-learning. But he imagined that learning was wisdom, and loved to pose as the wisest of mankind—the British Solomon, as his favourites were wont to call him.

This stuttering, shambling pedant now mounted the throne of the politic Elizabeth, and in a reign of twenty-two years contrived to wreck the strong position which the royal power held in England, and to make a revolution inevitable. The crash would have come in his own day, but for one thing—James, as we have said before, was a coward, and had not the courage to fight when affairs came to a crisis.

James based his preposterous claims to override the nation's will and the rights of Parliament on two theories, which represented to him the true foundations of all royal power. The first was his "prerogative," or power to dispense with ordinary laws and customs at his good pleasure. He saw that the Tudors had often gone beyond the letter of the mediaeval constitution, and thought that their action gave him a full precedent for similar encroachment. He forgot two things: first, that Henry VIII. and Elizabeth had lived in times of storm and stress, when firm governance was all-important, and much would be forgiven to a strong ruler; and secondly, that the two great Tudors had always taken the people into their confidence, and been careful to get popular support for their doings. He himself tried to impose an unpopular policy on an unwilling people, and never condescended to explain his motives.

*Doctrine of the
dispensing
power.*

The second pillar of the king's policy was the theory of "divine hereditary kingship"—a notion entirely opposed to the old English idea that the crown was elective. James chose to ignore such precedents as the elections of Henry IV. or Henry VII., where the natural heir had been passed over, and wished his subjects to believe that strict hereditary succession was the only title to the throne, and that nothing could justify or legalize any divergence from it. He claimed that kings derived their right to rule from Heaven, not from any choice by their subjects; hence it was impious as well as disloyal to criticize or disobey the king's commands. James found many of the clergy who were ready to accept this theory, partly because they thought they could justify it from the

*The "Divine
Right" of
kings.*

Scriptures, partly because they felt that the orderly governance of the Anglican Church was bound up with the royal supremacy. In Elizabeth's time it had been the queen's guiding and restraining hand which had prevented the nation from lapsing into the anarchical misgovernment which characterized Continental Protestantism.

When the new king crossed the Tweed in April, 1603, he was well received in England, where his weaknesses were as yet little known. Every one was glad to see the succession question settled without a war, and every party hoped to gain his favour. The Puritans trusted that a prince reared in the Calvinism of the Scotch Kirk would do much for them. The Romanists dreamed that the son of Mary of Scotland would tolerate his mother's faith. The supporters of the Anglican establishment thought that the king must needs become a good Churchman when he realized the position that awaited him as Defender of the Faith and Supreme Governor of the spiritual hierarchy that embraced nine-tenths of the nation.

James himself had no doubt as to his future behaviour. There was nothing that pleased him better than the idea of becoming the head of the English Church. In Scotland he had learnt to hate the dictatorial manners of the presbyters of the Kirk, and their constant interference in politics. The well-ordered and obedient organization which he found south of the Tweed, where every cleric, from the archbishop to the curate, looked for guidance to the sovereign, filled him with joy and admiration. He soon became the zealous patron of the Establishment ; he looked upon it as the bulwark of the throne, the best defence against disloyalty and anarchy. "No bishop, no king," was his answer to the Puritans, who strove to persuade him into abolishing episcopacy, and establishing a Presbyterian form of Church government.

Before James had been for a year on the English throne, he had shown his intentions in the matter of Church government. On his first arrival the Puritan party, both the Dissenters and the Conformists within the National Church, presented him with the "Millenary Petition,"* in which they complained that they were

* So called because it was supposed to be signed by 1000 ministers. As a matter of fact, it bore less than 800 names.

"overburdened with human rites and ceremonies" prescribed in the Prayer-book, and besought him to abolish episcopacy and purify the land from the remnants of Popish superstition. James invited representative Puritan ministers to meet him at the Hampton Court Conference (January, 1604), where they were to dispute with some of his bishops. But the Conference was a mere farce; the king browbeat and hectorated the ministers, and declared himself wholly convinced by the arguments of the Anglican clergy. He announced his full approval of the existing Church system, and that he would have "one doctrine, one discipline, one religion in substance and ceremony." The Puritans went away in sore displeasure, and from that moment the large number of them who had hitherto continued in the body of the National Church, began to desert it and to form various schismatic sects. We find it hard to-day to realize the fanatical scruples which made them see snares in a ring or a surplice, or deem that Episcopacy was a Romish invention; but we can understand that the real bent of their minds was directed against dictation in matters of conscience, and the denial of the right of private judgment. With their theory we may sympathize, but the actual points on which they chose to secede from the ancient Church of the land were miserably inadequate to justify schism. It is fair to add, however, that there was much to repel men of conscience and piety in the condition of the National Church. The bishops showed an unworthy subservience to the throne, which seemed peculiarly disgusting when the crown was worn by such a self-satisfied pedant as King James. A glance at the fulsome praises heaped upon him in the preface to the Authorized Version of the Bible will sufficiently serve to make this plain.

Almost the only sign of sagacity which the new king showed was that he kept in office, as his chief minister, Robert, the younger Cecil, son of the great Lord Burleigh. James made him Earl of Salisbury, and, first as Secretary of State and afterwards as Lord Treasurer, Cecil kept a firm hand on the reins of power, and restrained many of his master's follies. It was not till he died, in 1612, that the king was able to display his own unwisdom in its full development.

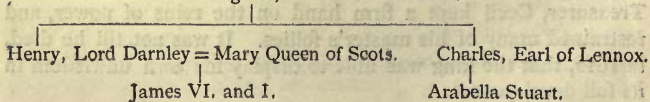
*Administration
of the younger
Cecil.*

Hence it comes that the nine years 1602–1611 are comparatively uneventful, and show little of the king's worst foibles. A few incidents only deserve mention in this period. **Cobham's Plot.** *Cobham's Plot*, which followed almost immediately on the king's accession, was a most mysterious business. It was said that Lord Cobham, Lord Grey, Sir Walter Raleigh the explorer, and certain others, all enemies of Robert Cecil, had formed a plot to kidnap the king, and force him to dismiss his minister—perhaps, even to depose him in favour of his cousin, Arabella Stuart, the child of his father's brother.* The whole matter is so dark that it is hard to make out what the conspirators desired, or even whether they conspired at all. Both extreme Puritans and fanatical Roman Catholics are said to have been engaged in the plot, and the wildest aims were ascribed to them. It is only certain that James and Cecil used the affair as a means for crushing those whom they feared. The unfortunate Arabella Stuart was put in confinement for the rest of her life; Raleigh languished twelve years in the Tower; and Grey and Cobham also suffered long imprisonment.

A clearer but not less strange matter was the famous *Gunpowder Treason* of 1605. A band of fanatical Catholics, disgusted that the king refused to grant the toleration they had expected, or to repeal the Recusancy laws, formed a diabolical scheme for murdering, not only James himself, but his sons and all the chief men of the realm. Their chiefs were Thomas Percy, a relative of the Earl of Northumberland, Catesby, Guy Fawkes, and Sir Everard Digby. Their plan was to hire a cellar which lay under the Houses of Parliament, fill it with barrels of gunpowder, and fire the train when the king was opening Parliament on the 5th of November. Lords, Commons, princes, and king would thus perish in a common disaster, while a Catholic rising and a Spanish invasion were to follow. Garnet, the Provincial of the Jesuits, was informed of the scheme by the conspirators, and kept it secret.

A mere chance saved king and Parliament. When all was

* Margaret, Countess of Lennox.



ready, and the cellar was charged with its murderous contents, one of the conspirators wrote an anonymous letter to his cousin, Lord Monteagle, a Catholic peer, imploring him not to attend on the 5th of November, on account of a great blow that was impending. Monteagle sent the letter to the king, whose suspicious mind—it will be remembered that his own father had perished by gunpowder—soon read the secret. The cellars were searched on the night of November 4, and Guy Fawkes, who was to fire the train, was discovered lurking there with his great hoard of powder. On the news of his arrest the other conspirators took arms, but their preparations had been ridiculously inadequate for their end, and they were easily hunted down and slain. Fawkes and Garnet the Jesuit were tortured, and then hung, drawn, and quartered. The only result of the Gunpowder Treason was to make the lot of the English Romanists much harder than before, for the nation thought that most of them had been implicated in the plot, and Parliament greatly increased the harshness of the Recusancy laws.

The persecuting of Romanists, however, was about the only point on which the king and Parliament could agree. From the very first, James and the House of Commons were at odds on almost every matter which they had to discuss. When peace was made with Spain in 1604, the House was ill pleased ; for a whole generation of Englishmen had grown up who looked upon war with King Philip as one of the natural conditions of life, and thought that the Spanish colonies in America existed solely for the purpose of being plundered by English buccaneers. James, on the other hand, hated all wars with a coward's hatred, and had a great respect for the ancient greatness and autocratic sovereignty of the Spanish kings. Taxation furnished another fertile source of dispute : the court was numerous, profligate, and wasteful, and, in spite of Cecil's economy, the king piled up a mountain of debts, and exceeded his revenue year by year. To fill his purse, he raised the scale of the customs-duties without the consent of Parliament (1608), and then refrained from calling the Houses together for two years. But in 1610 his increasing necessities forced him to summon them, and a sharp dispute about the legality of the increased customs at once began. It grew so bitter that the king dismissed the Parliament without having obtained the

Strife between
king and
Parliament.

money that he wanted, and was constrained to go on accumulating unpaid debts (1611).

Next year the great minister, Robert Cecil, died, and James was left to govern for himself as best he might. A great change was at once apparent. Its chief symptom was the **Death of Cecil.** beginning of the system of government by royal **—Rise of** favourites. Hitherto James had heaped wealth and favour on his minions, but had not dared to entrust them with affairs of state, so great was his fear of his able Lord Treasurer. When Salisbury was gone, the king fell entirely into the hands of the favourite of the hour, a young Scot named Robert Ker, who had been his page. James made him Viscount Rochester, put him in the Privy Council, and entrusted him with all his confidential business. Ker was a worthless adventurer, whose good looks and ready tongue were his only stock-in-trade. He used his influence purely for personal ends—to fill his pocket and indulge his taste for ostentation. When he meddled in politics, it was to encourage the king in courses which were hateful to the nation—in forming an alliance with Spain, and in persisting in illegal taxation.

Ker's domination in the king's council lasted about three years, and was ended by a shocking crime, which did more to lower the court and the king in the eyes of the people than anything which had yet occurred since James's **Murder of Sir T. Overbury.—** accession. Ker had become enamoured of Frances **Fall of** Howard, the wife of the young Earl of Essex, son of Elizabeth's unfortunate favourite. The countess returned his passion, became his paramour, and agreed to procure her divorce from her husband by bringing scandalous and indelicate accusations against Essex. But a certain Sir Thomas Overbury, an unscrupulous courtier, who was in the secret of this wicked plot, set himself to hinder the marriage, and threatened to make public what he knew. Rochester got him thrown into the Tower, and there he was poisoned by the revengeful countess, with or without the guilty knowledge of the favourite. Lady Essex brought her suit against her husband, and as the king interfered with the course of justice in her favour, the divorce was accomplished. The guilty pair were married with great state, and James raised Rochester to the earldom of Somerset to celebrate the occasion. But murder will out. Two years later the tale of Overbury's

assassination got abroad, and the king learnt the story of his favourite's dishonour. James was not quite dead to all feelings of right and wrong, the revelation greatly shocked him, and, moreover, he was growing tired of Somerset's arrogance and dictatorial ways. Hence it came about that he suffered the law to take its course. The earl and countess were tried and convicted of having poisoned Overbury ; their lives were spared, but they suffered long imprisonment, and disappeared into obscurity. It is said that Somerset saved his neck by threatening to reveal some disgraceful secret of the king's, of which he was possessed (1616).

It might have been supposed that Ker's scandalous end would have weaned King James from his propensity for favourites. But this was not so. He replaced the Earl of Somerset Ascendency of Buckingham. by another minion, George Villiers, the son of a Leicestershire squire. Villiers was as handsome and insinuating as Ker, and possessed far greater ability. He not only acquired an entire ascendancy over James himself, but mastered as completely the heir to the throne, Prince Charles. The king's elder son, Henry, Prince of Wales, had died four years before, during Somerset's day of power. He had been a very promising youth, and hated his father's ways ; hence some suspected that Somerset had poisoned him, though there seems to have been no foundation for the charge.

For the nine years which James had yet to live, he was completely in the hands of Villiers. The young favourite was vain, arrogant, and ambitious ; but worse men than he have lived ; he had the saving vice of pride, which kept him from many of the meaner sins. He was not cruel, avaricious, or revengeful, as his predecessor Somerset had been. But his influence on the realm was all in the direction of evil ; in his headstrong self-confidence, he thought that he was a Heaven-sent statesman, and led his weak and doting master into many follies.

The days of his domination are filled with the miserable story of the "Spanish Marriage." King James, as we have already had to remark, was filled with a great respect for the ancient power and wealth of Spain, and never realized how much the foundations of its strength had James's subservience to Spain. been sapped by the long and ruinous Dutch and English wars of Philip II. Spain was at this moment represented by a very able

ambassador, Sarmiento, Count of Gondomar, who systematically misled the king as to the views and intentions of his master, Philip III. His influence induced James to look to Spanish aid for a solution of all his financial troubles, for he thought that, in return for his alliance, Spain would lend or give him money to cover his annual deficits.

This beginning of subservience to Spain is marked by one of the blackest spots in the reign of James—the execution of Sir **Execution of** Walter Raleigh. The old explorer had now lingered for twelve years in the Tower, but got a temporary release by persuading James that he knew of rich gold-mines in Guiana, on the banks of the Orinoco, from which he could bring back a great ransom. He was permitted to sail, but the king informed Gondomar of the matter. Now, the Spaniards still looked on any interference in America as a trespass on their monopoly of the trade of the West. The ambassador sent news of Raleigh's approach to the governors of the West Indies, and preparations were made to give him a hot reception. When he reached South America, Sir Walter was easily drawn into hostilities with the Spaniards, and had to return, after failing to force his way up the Orinoco. When he reached England he was arrested, at Gondomar's request, for having engaged in fighting with a friendly power. But instead of trying him for this misdemeanour, the dastardly king beheaded him without giving him a hearing or an opportunity of defence, on the old charge of having been engaged in Cobham's Plot * fifteen years before. He fell a victim to Spanish resentment, not to any crime committed against his own king (1618).

The year of Raleigh's death saw the opening of a new set of troubles for King James. He had married his daughter Elizabeth to Frederic of the Palatinate, the most rash and venturesome of the Protestant princes of Germany. **Marriage of Princess Elizabeth.—The Thirty Years' War.** When the great religious struggle known as the Thirty Years' War broke out, Frederic took the lead among the Protestants, and seized the kingdom of Bohemia, one of the possessions of the Emperor Ferdinand, the bigoted and fanatical head of the Romanist party (1619). Frederic, however, was beaten, and lost not only Bohemia, but his own dominions in the Palatinate (1620). Concerned to see his favourite daughter

* See p. 354.

lose her crown and lands, King James conceived a hope that he might induce his Spanish friends to restore his son-in-law to his Rhenish electorate. He forgot that Philip III., as a devout Catholic, was much pleased to see the headstrong Frederic stripped of house and home. But while intriguing with Spain, James, with great duplicity, tried to persuade his subjects that he was ready to make war on the Emperor, in order to restore the elector by force of arms.

A Parliament was again summoned. It gave the king a liberal grant for the proposed war in Germany, but it then proceeded to investigate abuses. The most notable scandal which it discovered was that the Lord Chancellor—Impeachment of Bacon. the great philosopher, Francis Bacon, Lord Verulam—had been accepting gifts from corrupt suitors in his court—a misdemeanour so flagrant that it struck at the roots of all justice. Bacon pleaded guilty, and was removed from office (1621). The Parliament then began to discuss internal politics, praying for a more rigorous suppression of the Jesuits, and petitioning the king to marry his heir to a Protestant princess; for it was already rumoured that a Spanish match was being proposed for Prince Charles. After much angry debating on what he considered an invasion of his prerogative, James had to dismiss the two Houses (1622).

The reports which had reached the ears of the Commons about the marriage of the Prince of Wales were quite correct. The king and Villiers, who had lately been created Earl of Buckingham, had formed a chimerical plan The Spanish Marriage. for persuading the King of Spain to restore the elector to the Palatinate, by means of a marriage treaty. If Prince Charles were to offer to wed one of the Infantas, the sisters of Philip IV., they thought that the Spaniard would interfere in Germany in order to oblige his brother-in-law. Moreover, the rich dowry of the princess would serve to pay some of James's debts. They forgot that the King of Spain had no interest or inducement to attack the Emperor, his own cousin and co-religionist, and that the only thing which Philip really wanted to secure by a treaty with England, was toleration for the English Catholics.

From this foolish plan sprang the rash expedition of Buckingham and Prince Charles to Madrid. Thinking to win the consent of the Spanish king by appearing in person, and using

the weight of his own attractions, Buckingham persuaded the prince to accompany him, and crossed the Channel. **Buckingham and Prince Charles in Spain.** Charles seems to have formed a romantic affection, on hearsay evidence, for the Infanta, and followed his mentor with enthusiasm. They travelled rapidly and in disguise, and were able to present themselves at Madrid before the Spanish court had any idea of their having started. Their presence put Philip IV. in no small perplexity, for he had not really intended to complete the match. His sister, the Infanta Maria, was dismayed at the prince's arrival, and threatened to retire into a nunnery rather than marry him. There followed an interminable series of negotiations, in which the Spaniards attempted to scare off the unwelcome suitor, by proposing hard conditions to him. But Charles at once accepted every proposal made, even offering to grant complete toleration to Catholics in England, which he knew that the nation and Parliament would never permit. Buckingham, meanwhile, made himself much hated by the haughty Spanish court, owing to his absurd arrogance and self-complacency. At last, discovering that the Spaniards did not mean business, he persuaded the prince to take a ceremonious leave of King Philip, and brought him back to England. When they were well out of Spain, they sent back an intimation that nothing more could be done till the king promised to recover the Palatinate for the Elector Frederic—a polite way of breaking off the match.

Highly indignant with the Spanish court for its blindness to his own charms and attractions, the headstrong Buckingham resolved to revenge himself on them. This was **Alliance with France.** most easily done by forming an alliance with France, the eternal enemy of Spain. Accordingly, the favourite, on his return to England, began to urge the king and the prince to declare war on Philip IV., and to take up the cause of Lewis XIII. For once Buckingham had public opinion on his side, for war with Spain was always popular in England. The Parliament voted liberal subsidies for an army to be sent to Germany, and a French alliance was easily concluded. Prince Charles, quite cured of his infatuation for the Infanta, offered his hand to Henrietta Maria, the sister of Lewis XIII. She was at once betrothed to him, and the preliminaries for marriage were in progress when the old king suddenly died—worn out by slothful

living and hard drinking, to which he had grown much addicted of late years (February, 1625).

In two spheres only was the inglorious reign of James I. redeemed by some measure of success. The first was the realm of trade and colonial expansion. All through the early years of the century, English commerce was steadily growing, especially with the remote regions of Africa, China, India, and the Spice Islands. At the same time, the first successful English colonies were planted. The second plantation of Virginia was completed in 1607, the Bermudas were settled in 1616, Barbados in 1605. The far more important New England colonies date from 1620-28; they were founded by groups of nonconformist Puritans, who left their native country to escape the harassing laws against schism to which they found themselves subject. It is only fair to add that, when they had settled down in North America, they established a church system quite as intolerant and oppressive as that from which they had fled.

Commercial
and colonial
expansion.

The other sphere in which the reign of James showed a certain success was Ireland. When O'Neil, Earl of Tyrone, the old adversary of Queen Elizabeth, rebelled for a second time in 1607, his dominions in Ulster were confiscated, and carefully portioned out among English and Scotch settlers, who undertook never to resell them to natives. Many thousands of colonists crossed St. George's Channel, and by 1625 Ulster had a large and firmly rooted Protestant population, though its prosperity was founded on the systematic oppression of the native Irish.

Ireland.—
Ulster colo-
nized.

CHAPTER XXVI.

THE REIGN OF CHARLES I. TO THE OUTBREAK OF THE
CIVIL WAR.

1625-1642.

THE accession of Charles I. made a profound change in the destinies of England, for though the new king had the same policy and the same notions of government in Church and State as his father, yet his personal character was wholly different. James had been before all things a coward : he seldom dared to translate his theories into action, and hence it came that he died peacefully in his bed. His son, on the other hand, was not lacking in courage, and he was recklessly obstinate ; nothing could bend his will or teach him submission ; therefore he died on the scaffold.

Yet Charles was in every way superior to his father. He was a man of handsome face and stately carriage ; though reared in a profligate and vicious court, he had grown up with all the private virtues ; as a father and husband, he was admirable. He was sincerely religious, and ardently loved the Church of England. He was a wise and judicious patron of art and letters, but his tastes never led him into personal extravagance. If he had been born a peer instead of a prince, he would have been one of the best men of his day. But, unfortunately for England and for himself, he inherited a crown and not a coronet. He came to the helm of State fully persuaded of the truth of the two maxims that his father had taught him—that the royal prerogative overrode all the ancient national rights, and that the king ought to judge for himself in all things, and follow his own ideas, not the advice of his Parliament.

The accession of Charles was saluted with joy on all sides.

The nation thought that the young, chivalrous, and enterprising prince would reverse all his father's policy—he would cast away the hated Spanish alliance, and place England at the head of the Protestant powers of Europe, the position that she had held in Elizabeth's day. It was hoped that he would relegate the upstart Buckingham to the background, and rule for himself, but in accordance with the wishes and aspirations of the nation.

The first jarring note was struck when it became evident that the king was still under the control of his father's favourite. Villiers had somehow contrived to master the mind of the staid and firm Charles no less than that of the timid and irresolute James. When the first Parliament of the new reign was summoned, it found him in full possession of the king's ear, and dictating all his enterprises.

*Continued
ascendency of
Buckingham.*

The enormous demands for money which Charles laid before the Commons were enough to dash their spirits. The late king had left some £800,000 of debts, and in addition to the sum required to discharge them, £1,000,000 more was asked for purposes of war with Spain and the Emperor. To the disgust of Charles and Buckingham, Parliament voted only two subsidies, about £150,000, and granted "Tunnage and Poundage"—the customs revenue of the kingdom—for one year only, though it had been usual, in late reigns, to give it for the whole term of the king's life.

*Demands for
money refused
by the
Commons.*

The want of confidence which the Commons showed in Buckingham's administrative capacity was thoroughly justified. His first military adventure was a great expedition against the Spanish arsenal of Cadiz. A large fleet was sent out, but the generals were incapable, and the armament returned in a few months, without having accomplished anything save the capture of a single Spanish fort (1625).

*Expedition
against Cadiz.*

Meanwhile a new trouble was brewing. Charles had carried out Buckingham's scheme for an alliance with France, and had taken to wife the Princess Henrietta Maria, sister of Lewis XIII., the moment that the mourning for his father was over. Shortly after, his brother-in-law asked him for the loan of eight men-of-war, for the French navy was small and weak. The request was granted, and the

*Loan of ships
for the siege of
La Rochelle.*

French government then proceeded to use the ships against the rebellious Huguenots of La Rochelle, who were in arms against the king.

Now, the English nation had always felt much sympathy with the French Protestants, their old companions-in-arms in the days of Elizabeth, and the news that the royal navy was being used to coerce the Huguenots caused a great outcry throughout the country. All the blame was laid on Buckingham, as was but natural. He had also to face another accusation. Unable to get enough money from Parliament to fit out the unhappy expedition to Cadiz, the king had raised large sums by "benevolences" and forced loans—the old expedient of Edward IV

When, therefore, the second Parliament of the reign assembled in 1626, it proceeded, not to grant subsidies for the war, but to petition against Buckingham. The king took the matter in the most haughty and high-handed manner. "I must let you know," he exclaimed, "that I will not let any of my servants be questioned by you—much less those that are of eminent place, and near to me." He denied, in short, the ancient right of the House to petition against unpopular ministers—a right which it had used fifty times in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. But the Commons hardened their hearts, and proceeded to impeach the duke for having raised illegal taxes, sold public offices to unworthy persons, and lent the ships to France contrary to the interests of the realm and the Protestant faith. The king's reply was to dissolve them (June, 1626).

But the king and the duke had been seriously moved by the outcry against the loan of the ships to King Lewis. In a vain attempt to conciliate public opinion, and put themselves right with the nation, they suddenly reversed their policy of the last two years, and resolved to break with France, even though the Spanish war was still on their hands. With inconceivable frivolity and thoughtlessness, Buckingham proceeded to pick a quarrel with the French government, and to announce his intention of aiding the Huguenot rebels in La Rochelle against their sovereign.

War was declared against France, and Buckingham undertook to lead in person a great armament which was to raise the

Parliament
attacks Buck-
ingham.

11
The French
alliance
broken off.

siege of La Rochelle, now closely beleaguered by the royal armies. This expedition came to a bad end, like everything else which the headstrong and incapable duke took in hand. He landed on the Isle of Rhé, opposite La Rochelle, to drive off the French troops which shut the city in on the side of the sea. But there he suffered a fearful disaster: part of his army was cut to pieces, part compelled to surrender, and, after losing 4000 men, the duke hastily re-embarked for England (October, 1627).

**Expedition
in aid of La
Rochelle.**

But Buckingham was as obstinate as he was incompetent. He swore that he would still save La Rochelle, and began to gather a second army at Portsmouth to renew his attempt to raise the siege. While employed in organizing his new troops, he was stabbed and mortally wounded by John Felton, a discontented officer who had served under him in Rhé, and wished to avenge his private wrongs and free the country of a tyrant by this single blow (August, 1628).

**Buckingham
assassinated.**

By the death of his arrogant minister, the king obtained a splendid opportunity of setting himself right with the nation and turning over a new leaf. For men had agreed to consider Buckingham personally answerable for the disasters and illegalities of the two last years, and to hold the king guilty of nothing more than a misplaced confidence in his favourite.

Charles soon showed that he was not wiser nor more teachable than the duke. He took no new favourite into his confidence, and proceeded to act as his own prime minister, so that he made himself clearly responsible for all that followed. He had summoned his third Parliament early in 1628, hoping to extract from it the sums necessary to defray Buckingham's projected second expedition to La Rochelle. The Commons met in no pleasant mood, and were far more set on protesting against the doings of Buckingham than on granting money. The new House contained many men who were to be notable in after-years as the chief opponents of the king's misrule: Oliver Cromwell appeared for the first time to represent Huntingdon; Hampden, Pym, and Eliot were also numbered among the members—all three considerable personages, who had already protested against the methods of the king's administration.

**The Parliament
of 1628.**

Instead of waiting to be attacked, the Parliament of 1628 took

the initiative, by presenting to the king the celebrated Petition of Right—a document which demanded that certain ancient rights of Englishmen should be formally conceded by the king, namely, that no benevolences or forced loans should be demanded, no soldiers billeted on citizens without payment, no man imprisoned except on a specified and definite charge, and no martial law proclaimed in time of peace. Unless this petition was granted, they intimated that no supplies of money should be forthcoming (May 28). After some quibbling and hesitation, Charles gave his assent; money was absolutely necessary to him, and he was determined to have it. The subsidies were granted, and then in a few months he proceeded to break his plighted word.

When the Parliament met after its adjournment in January, 1629, it found that the king had already begun raising Tunnage and Poundage, which had not yet been legally granted him, and was imprisoning those who refused to pay. Their indignation was thoroughly roused, and they displayed such a combative spirit, that Charles determined to dissolve them at once. While his messenger was knocking at the door of the House, the Commons passed a hasty resolution, “that any one who should countenance Popery, or advise the levying of subsidies not granted by Parliament, should be reputed a capital enemy to the kingdom and commonwealth.” This declaration had hardly been carried, when the notice of dissolution was proclaimed (March 10, 1629).

After waging such bitter war with three successive Parliaments, Charles resolved to try the unprecedented experiment of governing without Parliaments at all. For eleven years he refused to summon the two Houses, and ruled autocratically without any check on his will (1629-1640). He marked his sense of the late Parliament’s conduct by apprehending several of its members, and sending three of them to the Tower. Sir John Eliot, the most prominent of these captives, and one of the best men of his day, languished to death in his prison, after a confinement of no less than three years.

After this cruel and unconstitutional beginning, Charles persevered in his evil ways. He chose a body of ministers who would obey his every command, displaced such judges and officials as showed any regard for the old customs of the realm,

and governed like a Continental tyrant. He was not a vicious or a malevolent man, but he was fully convinced that his prerogative covered every illegal act that he might commit, and he was persuaded that all who opposed him must be not only foolish but evil-disposed persons. As to the Petition of Right, he managed to forget that he had ever signed it.

The two chief councillors of the king in this unhappy period were William Laud, Archbishop of Canterbury, and Thomas Wentworth, Lord Strafford. The former was an Archbishop
Laud. honest but narrow-minded man, who had made a great reputation at Oxford as President of St. John's College, and had grown to note as the head of the High Church party in the University. He was a good scholar and an excellent organizer, but a martinet to the backbone. He accepted the archbishopric with the fixed idea of suppressing and crushing the Puritan party in and out of the Church of England. He hated the Puritan ideal of Church government on republican lines without king or bishop, and he equally detested the Calvinistic doctrine of predestination,* which was the shibboleth of Puritan theology. The king was a good Churchman, and gave Laud his full confidence; Laud, in return, became the zealous servant of Charles in secular no less than in religious matters. Not only did he teach consistently that it was a subject's duty to submit without question to a divinely ordained king, not only did he devote himself to molesting and harassing Puritans in the Church Courts, but he made himself the most prominent personage among the king's ministers. His name is signed at the top of every unwise ordinance that the Privy Council ever produced. He sat regularly in the two ancient but unconstitutional courts, the Star Chamber and the Court of High Commission, which punished those who had offended King Charles in matters secular or spiritual. Hence it came that he was hated, not only as an ecclesiastical tyrant, but as a temporal oppressor. Yet at bottom he was an honest and well-meaning man, who did but follow the dictates of his somewhat pedantic conscience.

It is difficult to give even this moderate praise to the other great minister who served King Charles. Sir Thomas Wentworth had been a great enemy of Buckingham in Parliament,

* The theory that all men are born to salvation or perdition, according to God's will, and have no share or responsibility in their own fate.

but after the duke's death he suddenly went over to the king, and enlisted in his service. Wentworth loved power above all things, and sold himself to Charles for high promotion. It was this desertion of his old party that made him so well hated by the friends of liberty. The king gave him the title of Strafford, and entrusted him first with the "Presidency of the North"—the government of the counties beyond the Humber; and afterwards with the Lord-Deputyship of Ireland. Strafford was a very capable man, with a hard hand and a great talent for organization. He called his system the policy of "*Thorough*," by which he meant a resolute persistence in ignoring all checks of custom or constitutional usage which might restrain the king's action, and a determination to crush all who dared to stand in his way.

The tale of Strafford's government in Ireland best illustrates what "Thorough" implied. He reduced the island to a more perfect obedience than it had ever known before, made its revenue and expenditure balance, kept up a large and efficient army, and encouraged trade and manufactures. But this was done at the cost of a ruthless disregard alike for law and morality. Strafford bullied and cheated the Irish Parliament; he set up illegal courts of justice; he dragooned the Scottish settlers in Ulster into accepting episcopacy. His worst measures, however, were reserved for the native Irish. On the preposterous plea that the landlords of Connaught could show no valid title-deeds for their estates, he proposed to confiscate the whole of that province, and settle it up with English. As a matter of fact, Connaught was mostly in the hands of ancient Celtic houses, who could show a tenure of many centuries, but had never consigned their claims to parchment. Strafford proposed to take heavy fines from a few of the unfortunate landholders, and to wholly evict the rest from their ancestral estates. And he would have done it, if troubles in England had not called him away from his task.

To enumerate all the unconstitutional acts of Charles I. in his eleven years of tyranny would be tedious. He had resolved to raise a sufficient revenue without Parliamentary grants, and to secure it he discovered the most monstrous devices. He established monopolies in the commonest products of trade, such as soap, linen, and

The Earl of
Strafford.—
"Thorough."

Strafford's
Irish policy.

Tyrannous
measures of
the king.

leather. He declared whole districts of England to be under forest law, though the forests had disappeared centuries before, and took heavy fines from the inhabitants. He revived the old law of Edward I., which compelled all owners of £40 a year in land to receive knighthood, and made them pay exorbitant fees for the honour. The arbitrary Star Chamber was set to inflict heavy fines on rich men for offences which did not come under the letter of any law, it strained angry words into libel or treason, and made family broils or personal quarrels a fruitful source of revenue. The fines ran up as high as £20,000.

Another invention of the king was the celebrated Ship-Money. In ancient times sea-coast districts had been wont to pay a special contribution in time of war, to provide vessels for the royal navy. Charles, in full time of peace, proposed to raise this tax from every county in England, as an annual imposition. John Hampden, the member for Buckinghamshire in the last Parliament, refused to pay the twenty shillings at which he was assessed, and took the case before the courts. But the subservient judges decided in the king's favour, and Hampden was rigorously fined (1637).

Beside financial extortion, the king countenanced much oppression of other sorts. Laud and his spiritual courts were always at work against the Puritans. The net result of their work was that the whole Calvinistic party in the Church of England went over to Nonconformity, and became for the most part Presbyterians. Few but the "Arminian"* High Churchmen remained in the Establishment. It is probable that these eleven years tripled the number of schismatics in the country. To illustrate the dealings of the Government with clamorous Puritans, the case of Dr. John Bastwick may be taken as an example. He accused the bishops of a tendency to Popery in a tract called "The New Litany." For this he was sentenced to lose both his ears, to stand in the pillory, to be fined £5000, and to be imprisoned till his death (1637).

Ship-Money.

**The Repres-
sion of
Puritans.—
Bastwick's
case.**

Such sentences, however, were not uncommon in the Court of Star Chamber; nor were they reserved for offenders against

* Arminius was a Dutch divine who violently opposed the doctrine of predestination; hence those who denied it were often called Arminians.

spiritual peers only. A case may be quoted even more astonishing than that of Bastwick. A lawyer named William Prynne wrote a book called "*Histriomastix*," protesting against the growing immorality of the stage. It contained words supposed to reflect on Queen Henrietta Maria, who was very fond of plays, and had sometimes acted in masques herself. For this Prynne was condemned to the same penalty as Bastwick—the pillory, the loss of his ears, and a fine of £5000.

It is not unnatural that England grew more and more disloyal as the years went by. The whole country was seething with discontent. Yet it was not south but north of the Tweed that the first blow was to be struck; it seemed that English wrath needed a Parliament to make its voice articulate. The Scots, on the other hand, found their centre of resistance in the strong local organization of their Kirk.

The cause of the Scottish outbreak was the king's attempt to force Episcopal government and High Church doctrine on the Kirk of Scotland, which was deeply attached to its Presbyterian constitution, and wholly committed to Calvinistic theology. Both James I. and Charles in his earlier years had made spasmodic attempts to bring the northern Church up to the same level of faith and ritual as that which prevailed in the south. They had been sturdily resisted, but the struggle had not grown quite desperate till 1637, when Charles and Laud seriously took in hand the conversion of Scotland. The first grievance was the issue, by royal authority alone, of a set of "canons"—or Church rules—drawn up by Laud (1636). They were universally disregarded, but in the following year matters came to a head when the king ordered a new Book of Common Prayer, drawn up on an Anglican model, to be taken into use in all the churches of Scotland. The attempt to introduce it led to the celebrated riot in St. Giles's, Edinburgh, where (as the story goes) the turmoil was started by an old woman hurling her stool at the dean's head, with the war-cry, "Will you say the Mass in my lug?" (ear). All the clergy who attempted to use the new Service-book were hustled and driven away (July, 1637).

It was evident that Charles would bitterly resent this national outburst, and in self-defence the Scots—nobles, ministers, and

burgesses alike—entered into the “National Covenant,” a solemn sworn agreement to stand by each other to resist tyranny and Popery. Soon after, the General Assembly of the Kirk met at Glasgow, declared the Scottish bishops tainted with Romanism, condemned the king’s new canons and Book of Prayer, and proclaimed that Episcopacy was altogether opposed to the rules of faith.

This was open rebellion in the king’s eyes, and he immediately began to make preparations for a military expedition against Scotland. The whole country was in the hands of the Covenanters, save some of the wild Highland districts, and it was evident that a national war was impending. At the first news of the king’s movements, the Scots raised an army of more than 20,000 men, led by veteran officers who had served on the Protestant side in the wars of Germany. This formidable force advanced to Dunse Law, in Berwickshire, and prepared to defend the line of the Tweed. The king had no standing army, save the troops whom Strafford had organized in Ireland: he was therefore compelled to call out the gentry and militia of the northern counties. It soon became apparent that he would not be able to rely on any willing service from these levies. Half England thought the Scots in the right; the men came in unwillingly and in inadequate numbers; and Charles found at York only a raw discontented force, quite unready to take the field. Dismayed at his weakness, he began to negotiate with the insurgents (June, 1639), but they would take no compromise, and as neither men nor money were forthcoming, the king was forced to take the desperate step of summoning a Parliament to grant him supplies.

The two Houses met in the spring of 1640, in no placable frame of mind. Eleven years of tyranny had maddened the nation, and now that England had found her voice again, it spoke with no uncertain sound. Her mood was quickly shown. Led by John Pym, the member for Tavistock, the Commons at once announced that they were come together to discuss grievances before thinking of grants of supply. Charles immediately dissolved the Parliament ere it had sat three weeks. Hence it is known as the “Short Parliament” (April-May, 1640).

Hardening his heart, Charles raised a few thousand pounds

by ship-money and other illegal devices, and launched his **The Rout of Newburn.** disaffected and undisciplined army against the Scots. But the men disbanded themselves at the first shot, and, after the disgraceful rout of Newburn, the Covenanters were able to occupy Northumberland and Durham, and established their head-quarters at Newcastle (August, 1640). The king had already summoned Strafford from Ireland, and the great Lord-Deputy had come over, but without his army. He was now given command of the wrecks of the levies in the north; but even he could not compel that discontented host to stand or fight. In despair, the king saw that he must make concessions to the nation, and called a new Parliament (November 3, 1640).

For the fifth time Charles found himself confronted with the angry representatives of the nation that he had wronged. But **The Long Parliament** this time the engagement was to be no short skirmish, but a long and desperate battle, destined to endure for eight years, and to end only with his overthrow and death. The "Long Parliament," unlike its predecessors, was to exist for many years. With it the king was to fight out the great dispute for the "sovereignty" of England—to settle whether, for the future, the royal prerogative or the will of the Commons was to be the stronger factor in the governance of the realm. In the existing crisis Charles felt that he was, for the moment, entirely at the mercy of the two Houses. The exchequer was empty, the army disloyal, an active enemy was in possession of the Northern counties. He shrank from playing his last stake by bringing over Strafford's troops from Ireland to resist the Scots, though the stern Lord-Deputy strongly urged him to take that measure.

When Parliament met, the same men who had been seen as members in 1628, and in the "Short Parliament" of the last **"King Pym."** spring, stood forward to confront the king. Pym at once marshalled all the forces of discontent into a compact host; so great was the power over them which he displayed, that he soon was nicknamed "King Pym" by the friends of Charles. He and his confidants were already in secret communication with the Scots, and spoke all the more boldly, because they knew that they could call down the Covenanting host on London, if the king should dare to withstand them.

The "Long Parliament" met on November 3. It at once proceeded to business. Eight days later, Pym moved that Strafford should be impeached for treason, and, in the following month, Laud was also arraigned on the same charge. Both were arrested, and sent to the Tower. The king made no attempt to defend them. Apparently, he was so conscious of his helplessness, and so dismayed by the riotous mob of London, and the fierce words of the Commons, that he had completely lost his head. It is certain that, if he had resisted, none but a few courtiers would have backed him. He sank in the most extraordinary way, in six months, from an autocrat into a nerveless, hunted creature, amazed at the wrath he had roused, and quite unable to defend himself.

Arrest of
Strafford and
Laud.

The dealings of the Parliament with the two great ministers, the archbishop and the Lord-Deputy, were summary and harsh, even to injustice. It is true that both Laud and Strafford had been cruel enemies of the liberties of England, but it would have been well, in punishing them, to proceed on the best constitutional precedents, and to let the course of justice be clear and calm. Strafford was impeached before the peers, and there was brought against him a vast weight of evidence to prove that, both as President of the North and as Governor of Ireland, he had committed scores of illegal, arbitrary, and cruel acts. But that the acts amounted to treason was not evident, and Pym and his friends were determined to find Strafford guilty of nothing less. After fourteen days' sittings, the accusers suddenly determined to change their procedure. Dropping the method of impeachment, they determined to crush Strafford by a simple declaratory bill of attainder, which stated that he had committed treason, and was worthy of death. This bill was brought into the House of Commons on April 10, and all its three readings were carried in eleven days. The main point on which the charge of treason was founded, was Strafford's advice to the king to bring over the Irish army, and the only proof of that advice was a paper of notes made in the Privy Council, which had surreptitiously come into Pym's hands.* Strafford had said, "Your Majesty has an army in

Trial and
execution of
Strafford.

* The notes were made by Sir H. Vane, one of the council, and a strong Royalist. But they came into the hands of his son, a bitter opponent of the king, who gave them to Pym.

Ireland, that you may employ to reduce this kingdom to obedience." It was not even certain that "this kingdom" meant England, and not Scotland, but on that evidence Strafford was convicted of plotting to levy war against the State. The vast majority of the Commons were determined to have his blood; 204 members voted for the bill, only 59 against it, and the names of the minority were soon placarded all over London as traitors to the commonwealth. The House of Lords approved the bill of attainder, and it was sent to the king. Charles had secretly given Strafford a pardon for all his acts, and promised to save his life. But in a moment of alarm, with the angry shouts of the Londoners ringing in his ears, he gave his assent to the bill. It was an inexcusably selfish and cowardly act, the one deed in all his life which we must stamp as mean and perfidious, as well as unwise. Strafford suffered on Tower Hill, with the stern courage that had marked all his acts, muttering, "Put not your trust in princes" with his last breath (May 12, 1641).

It was now the turn of the old archbishop. He was impeached on the 15th of December, both for illegal acts in the Star Chamber and the Court of High Commission, of which he was undoubtedly guilty, and for secret encouragement of Popery, of which he was as undoubtedly innocent. The articles drawn up against him were approved by the vote of both Houses, but he was not at once tried, but allowed to linger in the Tower, where he was to spend more than two years. Several minor ministers of the Crown were also impeached—Windebank, the secretary of state; Finch, the lord keeper; and the judges who had given the unrighteous decision in the ship-money case. The more prominent of these tools of the king saved themselves by flying over-sea.

But while bent on vengeance for the past, the Long Parliament was also desirous of securing good governance for the future. The spring and summer of 1641 saw the abolition of most of the machinery which Charles had used to carry out his tyranny. The two great unconstitutional courts, the Star Chamber and the Court of High Commission, were abolished by a law passed in July. By another, carried in February, it was provided that Parliaments

Impeachment
of Laud and
others.

Measures of
reform.

should be triennial, and that, if the king refrained for three years from calling the two Houses together, they should have the right to meet without his summons. In June a bill was drawn up, declaring illegal the exaction of ship-money, benevolences, and the rest of the king's favourite forms of extortion. An excellent device for keeping the law-courts free from royal interference was found by making the judges hold their office, not during the king's pleasure, but "*dum se bene gesserint*"—as long as they faithfully discharged their office. This swept away the power which the Stuarts had habitually used, of displacing every judge who gave decisions against the prerogative.

If the Long Parliament had halted here, we should owe it nothing but thanks and praise. Unfortunately, however, it soon began to press on from redressing national grievances to pandering to party animosities. The "Root-and-Branch" Bill. Most of its leading members were Puritans, and of them a majority was formed by those who had left the Church and taken to Presbyterianism. These Nonconformists were burning to revenge themselves on the Church of England for the tyranny which Laud and the Court of High Commission had exercised over them. The first symptom of their wrath was a bill for excluding the bishops from the House of Lords; this was afterwards enlarged into a scheme for abolishing the bishops altogether, and reorganizing the Church on a Presbyterian basis. In this form it was popularly known as the "Root-and-Branch" Bill, from a term used in a great London petition in its favour.

This sweeping party measure at once threw all the moderate men in the House, who remained loyal Churchmen, though they were also constitutional reformers, into a violent Split in the Parliamentary party. opposition to the majority. After much fierce debating, Pym and his friends passed the second reading by a small majority (138 to 105) in May, 1641. The third reading was bitterly debated all through the summer, but never carried through; in face of the danger of splitting the party of reform, the promoters of the bill wisely dropped it (August, 1641). But they never succeeded in reuniting the Churchmen to themselves in the firm alliance that had existed before. Men like Lord Falkland, Edward Hyde, John Colepepper, and others of equally liberal views, began to doubt the wisdom of continuing to act with a party which was tending

to appear more like a synod of fanatics than a committee of constitutional reformers.

It was the appearance of this split in the Parliament that first brought some comfort to the disconsolate Charles. After giving
Position of the king. a weak and insincere assent to every bill that was sent up to him in the summer, he began to pluck up his heart in the autumn of 1641. It was now his cue to assume the position of a constitutional king, and to accept the present position of affairs. But in his heart he was, no doubt, beginning to dream of ridding himself of his oppressors by the aid of the Church party and the moderate men. He spent the autumn in a visit to Scotland, where he endeavoured to conciliate the Covenanters by granting every request that they laid before him. But, at the same time, he was in secret negotiation with those of the Scottish nobles who disliked the domination of the Kirk, and was endeavouring to build up a Royalist party in the land.

It was while Charles lay in the north that there burst out troubles in Ireland, which were fated to do him no small harm.

The Irish Rebellion. The iron hand of Strafford had kept the Irish down for a space, in spite of all the wrongs and injustice which he had committed. When Strafford, however, was gone, the wrath of the oppressed natives boiled over, with all the more vigour because of this cruel repression. In October, 1641, there broke out a great national and religious rebellion, such as had not been seen since the days of Elizabeth. The old Irish clans rose to cast out and slay the English colonists. The Anglo-Irish Catholics of the Pale took arms at the same time, not to make Ireland independent, but to compel the king to take off all laws against Romanism, and turn the island into a Catholic country. In the North of Ireland, where the plantation of Ulster had worked the cruelest wrongs, the rising was attended with horrible atrocities. The natives, headed by Sir Phelim O'Neill, a distant kinsman of the old Earls of Tyrone, slew some 5000 of the unarmed colonists in cold blood. Many thousands more died from cold and starvation, being cast out of their dwellings and hunted away naked in the cold autumn weather. Unhappily for the king, the rebels thought it wise to give out that they acted by his permission in taking arms, and that they only struck at the English Parliament and the

Protestant religion. Phelim O'Neil even showed a letter purporting to come from Charles, and bearing the royal seal of Scotland, where the king at that moment was staying. It was a forgery, and the seal was taken from an old deed; but the English Puritans would believe anything of Charles, and jumped to the conclusion that he was guilty of fostering the rising, and therefore of authorizing the massacre.

Under the stress of the news from Ireland, the Long Parliament reassembled in the winter of 1641-42, in no amiable frame of mind. They signalized their reassembly by putting forth **The Grand** the "Grand Remonstrance," a kind of historical **Remonstrance.** summary of all the illegalities which Charles had committed since his accession, followed by a list of their own reforms already carried out, and a scheme for further reforms to come. These last were to include a bill to make the king choose no ministers or officials save such as Parliament should recommend to him, another for the complete suppression of Romanism, and a third for the "reformation" of the Church of England in the direction of pure Protestantism, that is, of extreme Puritanism. The first half of the "Remonstrance" passed the Commons with little opposition, but the last clauses, which practically bound the House to abolish Episcopacy and turn the Established Church into a Presbyterian Kirk, were hotly opposed by all the moderate party. In the end they passed by a narrow majority of eleven. But the victory of the Puritans involved a complete schism in the House. All the Church party now resolved that they would go no further; they would rather trust the king, in spite of all his faults, than the fanatical Presbyterians. For the first time in his life, Charles found himself allied to a powerful party in the Lower House.

He might have regained much of his authority if he had now played his cards wisely. But unwisdom was always his characteristic. Taking heart at the divisions among the Commons, he resolved to attempt a *coup d'état*. **Attempted** On January 4, 1642, he suddenly came down to the **arrest of the** House, with a great armed retinue of three or four hundred **five members.** men, intending to arrest the five chiefs of the Puritan party—Pym, Hampden, Holles, Hazelig, and Strode. They had received warning of his approach, and fled to the City, where the London militia armed in thousands to protect them. The

king looked round the House, and noted that the five members were not present. "I see the birds are flown," he exclaimed, and, after an awkward speech of apology, left the House.

The plan had completely failed. The Puritans were warned that the king was ready to resume his old illegal habits, and had Charles leaves London. not learnt his new position as a constitutional ruler. Charles himself was so mortified at the frustration of his scheme, that he hastily decamped, abandoning his capital to the Parliament and its enthusiastic supporters, the merchants and burgesses of the City.

The die was now cast. The next six months were occupied by both sides in preparations for war, which was evidently at Preparations for war.—The Royalist party. hand. Every man had now to choose his side and make up his mind. The king went round the Midlands, holding conferences with all whom he thought might be induced to support him. He found more encouragement than he had expected. A large majority of the peerage were on his side. They objected to being ruled by a House of Commons which had grown violent and fanatical. Almost the whole body of Churchmen all over the kingdom were also ready to join him. When forced to choose between a king who had been guilty of oppression and unwisdom, but who was undoubtedly a good Churchman like themselves, and a Parliament ruled by schismatics who wished to wreck the old Church, they reluctantly but firmly threw in their lot with Charles. There were whole shires where the Puritans were few and the Church was strong, and in these the king found promise of steady support. There were thousands who were moved by the old instinct of loyalty, and thousands more who hoped—unwisely perhaps, but whole-heartedly—that their master had learnt moderation, and would, if triumphant, never return to his old courses. Meanwhile Charles took a step which showed that he was preparing for the worst. He sent his wife over-sea, with all the money he could collect, and his crown jewels, bidding her spend the whole in buying munitions of war in France and Holland.

The Parliamentarians also were making their preparations. They were determined to get possession of the armed force of the nation—the militia, or "train-bands" of the shires and boroughs. With this object they sent the king proposals, which they could

hardly expect him to accept, that for the future the right to call out and officer the militia should be vested in the two Houses, and not in the Crown. The negative answer was promptly sent them back from Newmarket. They then proceeded to pass an ordinance, arrogating to themselves the right to nominate the lord-lieutenants, the official commanders of the militia, and ordering military authorities to look for their orders to the Houses, and not to the king. This ordinance never received the royal sanction, and was, of course, illegal in form ; nevertheless, it was acted upon.

The Commons
claim control of
the militia.

The crisis began when, in April, the king called on Sir John Hotham, governor of Hull, to admit him within the walls of that town, and make over to him a store of arms and munitions which lay there. Hotham shut the gates, and answered that he took orders from the Parliament alone.

Charles at
Hull.

The next two months were spent by both parties in gathering armies. In June the king sent "commissions of array" to trustworthy persons in every county, bidding them muster men in his name. The Parliament replied, not only by putting the militia under arms, but by raising new levies for permanent service in the field, under officers whom they could trust. They gave the supreme command to the Earl of Essex, the man who thirty years before had been so cruelly wronged by James I. and his favourite Somerset.

On August 22 the king set up his standard at Nottingham, and bade all his friends come to meet him. At the same time, Essex marched north from London. The war had begun.

CHAPTER XXVII.

THE GREAT CIVIL WAR.

1642-1651.

NINE years of almost continuous war, broken by only one short interval in 1647-48, followed the raising of the royal standard at Nottingham, on the 22nd of August, 1642. The first half of the contest (1642-46) may be defined as the struggle against the person of Charles, the second as the struggle against the principle of kingly government after Charles himself had fallen.

When the war began there was hardly a man on either side who did not believe that he was fighting in behalf of constitutional monarchy. The king and his party dis-
Principles of
the two parties. avowed all intention of restoring autocratic govern-
-The king. ment. On the royal standard and the royal coinage Charles bade the motto be placed, "I will defend the laws of England, the liberties of Parliament, and the Protestant religion." He declared that he was in arms to protect the old constitution against the encroachments of a Parliamentary faction who wished to degrade the crown and to destroy the Church.

The followers of Pym and Hampden, on the other hand, were equally loud in protesting that they were in arms only to protect
The Parlia-
mentarians. the ancient liberties of the realm, not to set up a new polity. They professed the greatest respect for the Crown, used the king's name in all their acts and documents, and stated that they were only anxious to come to terms with him on conditions which should give sufficient guarantees for the future welfare of the realm.

But there was a fatal weakness in the programme, both of the

royal and the Parliamentary party. The king's friends could never trust the Parliament's professions, because they believed it to be led by a band of fanatical schismatics. The Parliamentarians could never bring themselves to confide in the ruler against whom there stood the evil record of the years 1629-1640, and the even more discreditable incident of the attempt to seize the five members. When two enemies cannot trust each other's plighted word, they can do nothing but fight out their quarrel to the bitter end.

Mutual
mistrust.

At the moment when Charles marched from Nottingham, and Lord Essex from London, in August, 1642, neither party had yet any correct notion as to its own or its enemy's strength. In every county and borough of England each side had a following; as to which following was the stronger in each case, it was hard to make a guess. One thing only was clear—rural England was, on the whole, likely to cleave to the king; urban England to oppose him. Wherever the towns lay thick, Puritanism was strong; London, the populous Eastern Counties, Kent, the cluster of growing places on the borders of Yorkshire and Lancashire, from Leeds to Liverpool, were all Parliamentary strongholds. On the other hand, in the West and the North, and among the Welsh hills, the Church was still omnipotent, and Nonconformity was weak. These districts were led by the local peers, and still more by the county gentry, and of both those classes a large majority held to the king.

Local distribu-
tion of the
parties.

But no general rule could be drawn. There were towns like Worcester, York, Oxford, Exeter, where for various local reasons the king's party was the stronger. Similarly, there were many peers—about a third of the House of Lords—who adhered to the Parliamentary interest, and where they dominated the countryside it stood by the cause of the Commons. We need only mention the local influence of the Earl of Warwick in his own district of the Midlands, of the Earl of Manchester in Huntingdonshire, of Lord Fairfax in Mid-Yorkshire, as examples of the fact that the Parliamentary cause could draw much assistance from the magnates of the land. Still more was this the case among the lesser landholders. In the east of England a very large proportion of the gentry and all the yeomanry

were zealous Puritans ; even in the west there was a sprinkling of " Roundheads " * among the Royalist majority.

It was the saddest feature of the war, therefore, that every man had to draw the sword against his nearest neighbour, and that the opponents differed from each other, not so much on principle as on a point of judgment—the doubt whether the king or the Parliamentary majority could best be trusted to defend the old constitution. On each side there were many who armed with a doubting heart, not fully convinced that they had chosen their side wisely. This, at any rate, had one good effect—the war was, on the whole, mercifully waged ; there were few executions, no massacres, very little plundering. If we compare it with the civil wars of France or Germany, we are astonished at the moderation and self-restraint of our ancestors.

It was in August, 1642, as we have already mentioned, that King Charles bade his followers meet him at Nottingham. The Royalists of the Northern Midlands came to him in numbers far less than he had expected, wherefore he moved west to Shrewsbury, to rally his partisans from Lancashire, Cheshire, and Wales, where he knew that they were many and loyal. They came forward in great strength, and Charles was able to begin to organize his army into regiments and brigades. The cavalry was very numerous, if wholly untrained ; the nobles and gentry turned out in vast throngs, and brought every tenant and servant that could sit a horse. The infantry were the weaker arm ; the squires preferred to serve among the cavalry ; the townsfolk and peasantry, who should have swelled the foot-levies, were often apathetic where they were not disloyal. It was only in certain limited districts—Wales, Cornwall, and the North were the most noted—that the king could raise a trustworthy foot-soldiery. In the army that mustered at Shrewsbury he had 6000 cavalry to 8000 infantry—far too large a proportion of the former. Nor was it easy to arm the foot ; pikes and muskets were hard to procure, as compared with the trooper's sword. The king gave the command of the army to Lord Lindsey, but made his nephew, Rupert of the Palatinate, general of the horse.

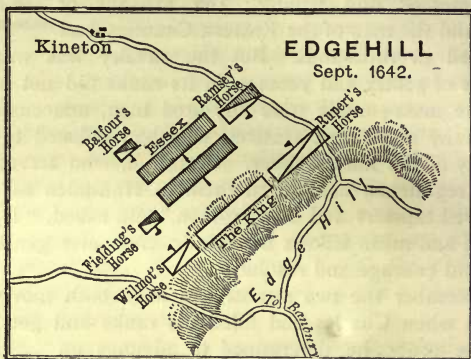
* The term " Roundhead," alluding to the close-cropped hair of the Puritans, which contrasted so strongly with the long locks which were then the fashion, is first found in use in the end of 1641.

Among the troops which Essex was enrolling and drilling at Northampton, the exact reverse was the case. The infantry were numerous and willing; the artisans of The Parliamentary forces. London and the men of the Eastern Counties had volunteered in thousands. But the cavalry was weak; the admixture of gentry and yeomen in its ranks did not suffice to leaven the mass; many were city-bred men, unaccustomed to riding, many more were wastrels who had enlisted to get the better pay of the horse-soldier. Cromwell, who served in one of these regiments, denounced them to Hampden as "mostly old decayed tapsters and serving-men," and asked, "How shall such base and mean fellows be able to encounter gentlemen of honour and courage and resolution?"

In September the two raw armies were both moving westward, but when Charles had filled his ranks and got his men into some order, he determined to advance on London. Marching by Bridgenorth and Birmingham, he reached the slopes of Edgehill, on the Charles moves towards London. borders of Warwickshire and Oxfordshire, on October 23. He had slipped round the flank of Lord Essex, who was waiting for him at Worcester, and the Parliamentary army only overtook him by hard marching. When he saw the enemy approaching, Charles ranged his order of battle on the hillside, and charged down on Essex, who was getting into array on the plain below.

The incidents of Edgehill were typical of the whole struggle. On each flank the king's gallant horsemen swept off the Parliamentarian cavalry like chaff before the wind; Battle of Edgehill. and a third of the infantry of Essex was also carried away in the disaster. But the reckless Cavaliers, headed by Prince Rupert, were so maddened by the joy of victory, that they rode on for miles, driving the fugitives before them, and gave no thought to the main battle. Meanwhile, in the centre, Lord Essex, at the head of the two-thirds of his infantry which had stood firm, had encountered the king's foot with very different results. After a short struggle, he burst through the Royalist centre, and captured the king's standard and the whole of his artillery. A few hundred Parliamentary horse—Oliver Cromwell was among them—had escaped from the general flight of their comrades, and by their aid Essex cut several

regiments of the Royalists to pieces, and thrust the rest in disorder up the slopes of Edgehill.



When Rupert and his horse returned at eventide, they found to their surprise that they had taken part in a drawn battle, not in a victory. Both sides were left in the same position as before the fight, but the king had one advantage—he was the nearer to London, and was able to march off in the direction of the capital. Essex, with his cavalry gone and his infantry much mauled, could not detain him, and was constrained to make for London by the long route of Warwick, Towcester, and St. Albans, while the king moved by a shorter line through Oxford and Reading. But Charles lingered on the way, and the travel-worn troops of the earl reached the goal first. Even now, if Charles had struck desperately at London, he might perhaps have taken it. But his irresolute mind was cowed by a strong line of earthworks at Turnham Green, behind which lay not only Essex, but the whole train-bands of the capital, 20,000 strong. Instead of assaulting the lines, he drew back to Reading, and sent proposals of peace to the Parliament, hoping that their confidence was sufficiently shaken to make them listen to his offers (November 11).

This retrograde movement was his ruin. The City had trembled while the host of the Cavaliers lay at Brentford and Kingston ; but when it withdrew without daring an assault, the spirits of leaders and people rose again, and there was no talk of surrender or compromise. For the rest of the

winter, however, the operations languished in front of London. The king retired to Oxford, which he made his arsenal and base of operations ; the Parliamentarians remained quiet, guarding the capital.

While the campaign of Edgehill and Brentford was in progress, there was fighting going on all over England. In each district the local partisans of king and Commons were striving for the mastery. In the East the Roundheads carried the day everywhere ; the whole coast from Portsmouth to Hull, with all the seaboard counties, fell into their hands. In the West and North the result was very different ; Sir Ralph Hopton beat the king's enemies out of Cornwall and the greater part of Devon. The whole of Wales, except the single port of Pembroke, was won for Charles. In Yorkshire there was fierce fighting between two local magnates, the Marquis of Newcastle on the royal, Lord Fairfax on the Parliamentary side. By the end of the winter Newcastle had got possession of the whole county except Hull, and the cluster of manufacturing towns in the West Riding and on the Lancashire border. He had raised an army of 10,000 men, and controlled the whole countryside from the borders of the Scots as far as Newark-on-Trent. But in the Midlands the first campaign settled nothing ; districts that held for the king and districts that held for the Parliament were intermixed in hopeless confusion. It would obviously need much further fighting before any definite result could be secured.

After futile negotiations had filled the winter months, the spring of 1643 saw the renewal of operations all over the face of the land. The negotiations, indeed, were but a foolish waste of time. It was not likely that the king would accept the two conditions which the Parliament made a *sine qua non*—the grant to them of the power of the sword by the Militia Bill, and of the right to “reform” the Church by turning it into a Presbyterian Kirk. The struggle had to proceed, though both parties found it extremely hard to maintain. The king more especially had the greatest difficulty in finding the “sinews of war.” The sale of the crown jewels was but a temporary expedient ; the loyal offerings of the Oxford Colleges, who sent all their gold and silver plate to be melted down at the mint which the king had set up in their midst, could not last for long.

Local contests
throughout
England.

Charles in want
of money.

The Royalist gentry soon stripped their sideboards and strong boxes bare. The want of a regular supply of money was always checking the king's movements. He called together a Parliament at Oxford, to which came a majority of the House of Lords, and nearly a third of the House of Commons, and this body granted him the right to raise forced loans under his privy seal, and to take excise duties all over the realm; but as the richest part of England was not in his hands, this financial scheme was not very successful. Charles was always on the verge of seeing his army disband for want of pay. The Parliamentarians were somewhat better off, owing to their control of London and the other chief ports of the kingdom, but even they were often in dire straits for money, and heard unpaid regiments clamouring in vain for food and raiment.

The events of the campaign of 1643 were no more decisive than those of the previous autumn. In the centre the king and Essex watched each other all through the summer without coming to a pitched battle. The only event of note in these months was the death of Hampden, the second man in importance among the Parliamentary leaders, in a cavalry skirmish at Chalgrove Field. But on the two flanks the Royalists gained important successes. Hopton, with the army of the West, swept over Somerset and Wilts, routing Sir William Waller—an enterprising but very unlucky general—at Lansdown (July 5), and afterwards at Roundway Down near Devizes (July 13). In consequence of these victories, Bristol, the second town in the kingdom, fell into Royalist hands (July 26). A further advance put the army of the West in possession of Hampshire and Dorsetshire, so the Roundheads retained nothing in the South, except the ports of Plymouth and Portsmouth, with a few scattered garrisons more.

At the same time, the Marquis of Newcastle beat Lord Fairfax and his son Sir Thomas, the mainstays of the Parliamentary cause in the North—at Adwalton Moor (June 30)—a victory which enabled him to conquer the Puritan stronghold in the West Riding, and to drive the last wrecks of the enemy into Hull. Newcastle would have won Lincolnshire also, but for the resistance made by a new force, the levy of the "Associated Counties." The shires of Norfolk, Suffolk, Essex, Cambridge, and Huntingdon,

1643. Royalist
successes—
(1) in the West.

(2) in the
North.—The
"Associated
Counties."

had banded themselves together to raise a local army. It was a zealous and well-disciplined force, commanded by Lord Manchester, under whom Oliver Cromwell served as general of horse. It was Cromwell's ability as a cavalry leader which saved Lincolnshire to the Parliament, by the winning of the hard-fought engagements of Gainsborough (July 28) and Winceby (October 11).

Charles should now have called in Hopton and Newcastle to his aid, and marched straight on London. But both the West-country and the Yorkshire Royalists disliked leaving their own districts. Hopton's and Newcastle's men protested against being called up to Oxford before they had made a complete end of their own local enemies. Charles was weak enough to yield to their wish, and meanwhile resolved to take Gloucester, the one great Roundhead stronghold left in the West. He laid siege to it on August 10; but on the news of his march westward, the Parliament gave Lord Essex peremptory orders to attempt its relief at all costs. Reinforced by six strong regiments of London train-bands, zealous but new to war, he marched with 15,000 men into the West. When he approached the besiegers, Charles resolved not to fight in his siege-lines, but to attack Essex in the open. He therefore raised the siege, allowed the earl to revictual Gloucester, but placed himself across the line of retreat to London. At Newbury, in Berkshire, Essex found the king's army arrayed on both sides of the London road, and ready to receive him (September 19). There followed a fierce fight among lanes and hedges, as Essex strove to pierce or outflank the royal line. Prince Rupert threw away the best of his horsemen in attempts to break the solid masses of the London train-bands, who showed a steady power of resistance very admirable in such young soldiers. In one of these desperate charges fell Lord Falkland, the wisest and most moderate of the king's councillors, who is said to have deliberately thrown away his life because of his sorrow at the long continuance of the war. After a hard day's work, the earl had partly cut his way through; and in the night the king, alarmed at the fact that his infantry and artillery had exhausted all their powder, ordered his army to retreat on Oxford. Then the Parliamentarians were able to force their way to Reading without further molestation.

Siege of Gloucester.—First Battle of Newbury.

Thus the end of the campaign of 1643 left matters in the centre much as they had been nine months before. But on the flanks, in Yorkshire and the south-west, the Royalists had won much ground, and were in full communication with the king through their strong posts in Bristol and Newark. While arms had proved unable to settle

The Solemn
League and
Covenant.



the struggle, both sides had been trying to gain help from without—the Parliament in Scotland, the king in Ireland. The zealous Covenanters of the North, before consenting to give armed support to the Roundheads, insisted on receiving pledges from their allies. Accordingly, the Parliament swore a Solemn League and Covenant, “to preserve the Kirk of Scotland in doctrine, worship, and governance, and to reform religion in the

Church of England according to God's Holy Word." The second clause implied the destruction of Episcopacy, and the introduction of Presbyterianism into the southern kingdom (September 25). In return for this pledge the Scots promised to send an army of 10,000 or 15,000 men over the Tweed in the following spring. The conclusion of this treaty was the last work of Pym, the king of the Commons, who died six weeks later. No civilian came forward among the ranks of the Parliamentarians to take up his mantle.

Meanwhile the king had sought aid from Ireland. Ever since the massacre of 1641, the Irish rebels had been fighting with the Marquis of Ormonde, Strafford's successor in the governance of that unruly realm. They had occupied six-sevenths of the country, and held Ormonde's men pinned up in Dublin, Cork, and a few other strongholds. Charles now conceived a scheme for patching up a peace with the rebels, and thus making it possible to bring over Ormonde's army, Strafford's veteran regiments, to join in the English war. With this end he negotiated a truce called "the Cessation" with the Irish (September 15), leaving the "Catholic Confederates" to govern all the districts that were in their hands, and promising to devise a scheme of toleration for Romanists. This truce enabled Ormonde to begin sending over his troops to England; it was also arranged that native Irish levies should be lent to the king by the "Catholic Confederates," and Lord Taaffe, one of the leading rebels, promised to make a beginning by bringing over 2000 men. This alliance with the fanatical Romanists of Ireland, the perpetrators of the Ulster Massacre of 1641, did Charles much harm. The Puritans began to dream of England dragooned by wild Irish Papists, and thought that the fires of Smithfield would ere long be relighted. They grew fiercer than ever against the king.

Charles seeks
aid from
Ireland.

In December, 1643, Ormonde's first regiments began to pass the Channel and arrive at Chester. In January, 1644, the Scots crossed the Tweed under the Earl of Leven. Before winter was over the strife had begun, and the new forces on each side were engaged. In January Sir Thomas Fairfax, with the Yorkshire Parliamentarians, had slipped out of Hull, whose siege had been raised by the Marquis

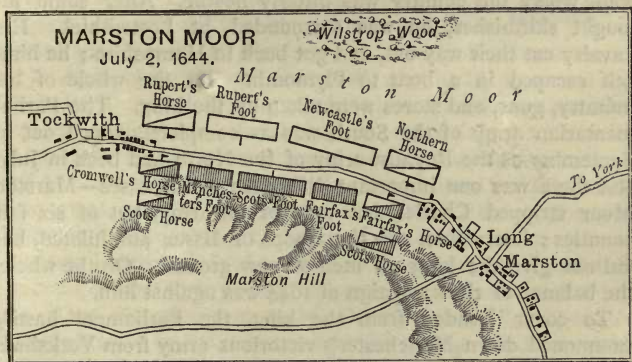
1644. Rout of
the Irish levies.
--The Scots in
England.

of Newcastle, and fell suddenly upon the Irish army at Nantwich, near Chester. He completely routed it, and dispersed or took almost the whole. Meanwhile the Scots were slowly pushing southward, driving the marquis before them through Durham and the North Riding. In April they joined Fairfax at Selby, near York, and the united forces so much outnumbered Newcastle's force, that he sent in haste to the king at Oxford, to say that all the North would be lost if he were not promptly aided by troops from the Midlands. Charles, though he could ill spare men, gave his nephew Rupert a large force of cavalry, and bade him march rapidly on York, picking up on his way all the reinforcements he could raise in Shropshire, Cheshire, and Lancashire. In June the prince reached York with nearly 10,000 men, and joined Newcastle's army. Even before his arrival the enemy received a corresponding reinforcement: Lord Manchester and Oliver Cromwell, with the army of the "Associated Counties," had crossed the Trent and entered Yorkshire to join Fairfax and the Scots. A great battle was imminent, and one that would be fought by forces far larger than had yet met in line during the war, for each side mustered more than 20,000 men.

The fate of the Northern Counties was settled by the meeting of the two armies at Marston Moor, near York, on the 2nd of July. The Parliamentarians and their Scottish allies had drawn themselves up on a hillside overlooking the moor, Fairfax and his Yorkshiremen on the right, the Scots in the centre, Manchester and the men of the Eastern Counties on the left. Rupert marched out from York to meet them, and ranged his men on the moor below—he himself taking the right wing, while Newcastle's northern levies had the left. Before the prince's host was fully arrayed, the enemy charged down the hill, and the two armies clashed all along the line. On the Royalist left, Lord Goring with the northern horse completely routed the troops of Fairfax, and then turned against the Scots, and broke their flank regiments to pieces. Then, thinking the day their own, the Cavaliers rushed on in pursuit, and swept off the field. But on the Royalist right the matter had gone very differently. Cromwell, with the eastern horse, had there met the fiery Rupert in person; the struggle was long and fierce, but at last Cromwell's men, godly

Battle of
Marston Moor.
—The North
lost to Charles.

yeomen of Norfolk and Cambridgeshire, whom their general had picked and trained with long care, showed that religious fervour was even better in battle than the reckless courage of the Cavaliers. Rupert's regiments were driven off the field, and then the cool-headed Cromwell, instead of flying in pursuit, led his troopers to aid the much-tried Scots in the centre. By his charge the Royalist foot was broken, and Goring's horse dispersed when it straggled back to the battle. The day, which had begun so doubtfully, ended in a complete victory for the Parliament. Rupert rallied 6000 horse, and took them back to Oxford, but the rest of the Royalist army was lost. Four thousand had fallen,



many dispersed, the rest fell back into York, and there surrendered a few days later. Lord Newcastle, angry at Rupert's rashness before the fight and his mismanagement in it, took ship to Holland, and never struck another blow for the king. Meanwhile Manchester and the Scots overran all the North, and the land beyond Humber was wholly lost to the king. The northern Royalists had been utterly destroyed.

This disaster would have been completely ruinous to the king, if he had not partly preserved the balance of strength by winning a great victory in the south. The Parliament had hoped to do great things with their home army, and had started the campaign successfully, for Sir William Waller had beaten the west-country troops

Battle of Lostwithiel.—
Essex's army
destroyed.

of Lord Hopton at Cheriton in March, and driven the Royalists out of Hampshire. But calamity followed this good fortune ; in the summer the Earl of Essex led a great host into Wilts and Somerset, to complete Waller's success by recovering the whole of the South-Western Counties. But the king dropped down from Oxford with his main army, and placed himself between Essex and London. The position was much the same as it had been a year before at Newbury Field. But this time the earl displayed great indecision, and grossly mishandled his men. Instead of forcing his way home, at any cost, he retreated westward before Charles, and was gradually driven into Cornwall, where the country was bitterly hostile. After some ill-fought skirmishes, he was surrounded at Lostwithiel. His cavalry cut their way out, and got back to Hampshire ; he himself escaped in a boat to Plymouth. But the whole of his infantry, guns, and stores were taken by the king. The Parliamentary army of the South was as completely wiped out in September as the Royalist army of the North had been in July. But there was one important difference in the cases—Marston Moor stripped Charles not only of an army, but of six fair counties ; Lostwithiel saw the troops of Essex annihilated, but did not give the king an inch of new ground. On the whole, the balance of the campaign of 1644 was against him.

To cover London from the king, the Parliament hastily summoned down Manchester's victorious army from Yorkshire, and added to it Sir William Waller's force. Their united hosts fought the indecisive second battle of Newbury with the royal troops on the 22nd of October. Here Manchester, by his sloth and indecision, left Waller to do all the fighting, and almost lost the day. But in the end Charles withdrew to Oxford, leaving the field to his enemies.

The winter of 1644-5 was fraught with events of deep importance. The Parliament made one final attempt to negotiate with the king, only to receive the answer, "I will not part with these three things—the Church, my crown, and my friends, and you will yet have much ado to get them from me." Irritated at the king's unbending attitude, they took a step which they knew must render all further attempts at peace impossible. Drawing out of prison the old Archbishop of Canterbury, they proceeded to pass a bill of attainder against

**Second battle
of Newbury.**

**Execution of
Laud.**

him, and condemned him to death. Laud went piously and resolutely to the scaffold, asserting, and truly, that he died the martyr of the Church of England, not the victim of his political doings. This execution was an unpardonable act of cruelty and spite. The old man had lingered three years in prison, was perfectly harmless, and was slain partly to vex the king, partly to satiate the religious bigotry of the Presbyterians—a sect quite as intolerant as Laud himself.

But while Laud's attainder was passing, another important matter was in hand. The campaign of the previous year had been fatal to the reputation of the two chief Parliamentary generals, Essex and Manchester—the one for losing his army at Lostwithiel, the other for his perverse malingering at Newbury. Waller and several more were in little better odour. Cromwell, who had long served as Manchester's second in command, led a crusade against his chief, and accused him of deliberately protracting the war. It was generally felt that the armies of the Parliament would fare much better if they were entrusted to professional soldiers, and not to great peers or prominent politicians. Hence came the celebrated "Self-denying Ordinance," by which the members of the two Houses pledged themselves to give up their military posts, and confine their activity to legislative and administrative work. One exception was made—Oliver Cromwell, whom all acknowledged to be the best cavalry officer in the Parliamentary army, was permitted to keep his military post. But Essex, Manchester, and the rest retired into civil life.

The "Self-denying Ordinance."

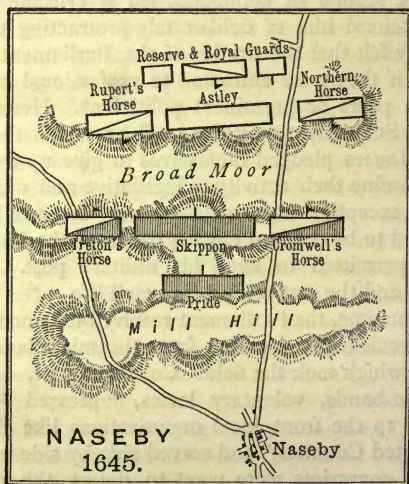
At the same time, the Parliament resolved to remodel its army. Much inconvenience had arisen from the miscellaneous nature of the forces which took the field. County militia, London train-bands, voluntary levies, "pressed men" forced to the front, local organizations like the army of the "Associated Counties," had served side by side in some confusion. The conscripts were wont to desert, the militia protested against crossing their county boundary, the train-bands melted back to their shops if they were kept too long under arms. To do away with these troubles, the Parliament now created the "New-Model Army," a standing force of some 20,000 picked men, to be led by Sir Thomas Fairfax, with Cromwell as his second in command. This proved a very formidable

The "New-Model Army."

host. The troops were mainly veterans, all were zealous and willing, and the officers were most carefully selected. The horsemen more especially were vastly superior to the old Parliamentary troopers. Cromwell modelled them on his own East-country regiment, filled the ranks with "men of religion," who looked upon the war as a crusade against Popery and tyranny, and drilled his cuirassiers—the "Ironsides," as they were called—into the highest state of efficiency

Next spring the "New-Model" was sent out to try its fortune against the Cavaliers. The king had led his army northward to restore the fortunes of his party in the valley of the Trent, where Newark was now his most advanced post. On his way he stormed the important Parliamentary town of Leicester, but his progress was then stayed by the news of the approach of

1645. Battle of
Naseby.—The
Midlands lost
to Charles.



Fairfax. Despising the "New-Model," the Cavaliers turned fiercely to attack it, though the royal host was the smaller by several thousands. They seem to have put only 9000 men into the field against 13,000. Charles and Fairfax met at Naseby, in Northamptonshire, and there fought out the decisive battle of the first civil war. Once more it was Rupert

who lost the day, and Cromwell who won it. The prince, with the right wing of the royal horse, routed his immediate opponents, and rode off the field in reckless pursuit of them. But on the king's left Cromwell and his Ironsides broke to pieces the Cavaliers of the North, and then steadied their ranks and rode against the flank of the Royalist infantry. Charles sent in his reserve to aid his flagging centre, and prepared to charge himself at the head of his body-guard. "Will you go to your death?" cried the Earl of Carnwath, who seized the royal rein, and turned his master out of the press. Charles yielded, and rode back. Far better would it have been for him and for England if he had gone on to make his end among the pikes. Cromwell's charge settled the day; the Royalist foot were ridden down or captured; the wrecks of the horse joined the late-returning Rupert, and escorted their master back to Oxford (June 14, 1645).

Naseby decided the fate of the war. The king could never raise another army in the Midlands. His whole infantry force was gone, and for the next eight months he rode helplessly about the shires with 2000 or 3000 horse, vainly trying to elude his pursuers and scrape together a new body of foot. His only hope was in an ally who had arisen in Scotland. James Graham, Marquis of Montrose, a Scottish peer who had grown discontented with the Covenant, had raised the royal standard in the Highlands in the preceding year. He was a born leader of men, and, though at first followed by a mere handful of wild clansmen, soon made his power felt in the war. After routing two small armies in the north-east, he turned upon Argyleshire, and almost extirpated the whole Covenanting clan of the Campbells at Inverlochy (January, 1645). Then, descending upon the Lowlands, he cut to pieces a large army at Kilsyth (August 15), seized Glasgow, and mastered the greater part of Scotland. Charles resolved on joining him, and trusted to turn the fate of the war by his aid. But Montrose's Highland levies melted home to stow away their plunder, and he was left at the head of a comparatively small force for the moment. Then Leslie led back across the Tweed the Scottish army which had been serving in England, and surprised and routed Montrose at Philiphaugh (September, 1645).

There was no further hope for Charles from Scotland, and

Charles a fugitive.—Career of Montrose.

his sole remaining army, the force in the West, under Hopton and Goring, was also doomed. After Naseby, **1645-6. End of the war in the West.** Fairfax led the "New-Model" into Somersetshire, beat Goring at Langport, and captured Bristol (September, 1645). The Royalists were driven westward towards the Land's End. In the next spring Fairfax followed them, took Exeter, beat Hopton at Torrington, and steadily drove the wrecks of the enemy onward till their back was to the Cornish sea. Escape was impossible, and the king's army of the West laid down its arms (March, 1646).

The king had now lost all hope, and when the Roundhead armies began to muster for the siege of Oxford, his last stronghold, he took a desperate measure. He thought **Charles gives himself up to the Scots.** that the Scottish Covenanters were less bitterly hostile to him than the English Parliamentary party, and resolved to give himself up to them rather than to his English subjects. Slipping out of Oxford in disguise, he rode to the Scottish camp at Newark, and there surrendered himself (April, 1646). He was not without hope that he might yet save his crown by coming to terms with his subjects; for he had an overweening belief in his own power of diplomacy, and did not understand how deeply his old evasions and intrigues had shaken men's confidence in his plighted word. Yet he had his better side; he sincerely believed in his own good intentions and his hereditary rights, and there were two things which he would never give up under any pressure—his crown and his adherence to the Church of England.

The Scots were delighted to have Charles in their hands, and proposed to restore him to his throne if he would promise to **The Scots deliver him to the Parliament.** take the Covenant and impose Presbyterianism on England. This demand hit the king on a point where his conscience was fixed and firm; he would never sell the Church to its foes, so he temporized and dallied with the Scots' proposals, but would not accept them. Disgusted at his refusal, the Covenanters resolved to surrender him to the English Parliament. After stipulating for the payment of all the arrears of the subsidies which were owed them for their services in England, they gave up the king to his enemies—a proceeding which contemporary opinion called "selling their master for £400,000" (January, 1647).

Even yet Charles had not abandoned all hope ; he knew that his victorious enemies were much divided among themselves, and thought that by embroiling them with one another he might yet secure good terms for himself. The two parties which split the Parliament were the Presbyterians and the Independents. The former, of whom we have heard so much already, were desirous of organizing all England into a Calvinistic Church on the model of the Scottish Kirk ; they were as intolerant as Laud himself in the matter of conformity, and intended to force the whole nation into their new organization. Papists, Episcopalians, and Non-conformists of every kind were all to be driven into the fold. This plan did not please the "Independents"—a party who consisted of men of all sorts and conditions, who only agreed in disliking a State Church and a compulsory uniformity. Some of the Independents were wild sectaries—Anabaptists, Levellers, and Fifth-Monarchy-men, who held the strangest doctrines of an immediate Millennium. Others were men who merely insisted on the responsibility of the individual for his own conscience, and thought that the State Church, with its compulsory powers, was a mistake, coming between God and man where no mediator was required. Hence the watchword of the Independents was the toleration of all sects, and they steadfastly resisted the Presbyterian doctrine of forced conformity. The Independents were very strong in the army, and Cromwell, the coming man, was a pillar of their cause. On the other hand, the Presbyterians had a decided majority among the members of the Parliament.

As representing the party of toleration, the Independents were quite prepared to leave Episcopalians alone, and it was therefore with them, rather than with the rigid and bigoted Presbyterians, that the king hoped to be able to ally himself. But it was the Presbyterians who swayed the House, and had possession of Charles's person ; with them, therefore, he had to treat. The Parliamentary majority did not yet dream of abolishing the monarchy ; they were bent on two things—on tying the present king's hands so tightly that he should never again be a danger to the common weal, and on forcing him to consent to the establishment of Presbyterianism as the State religion. The former was a rational

Presbyterians
and Inde-
pendents.

Parliament
offers terms to
Charles.

end enough, for Charles could never be trusted ; the latter was a piece of insane bigotry, for the Presbyterians were a mere minority in the nation, far outnumbered by the Episcopalians and the Independents. The "Propositions" of the Parliament took the form of a demand that Charles should surrender all claim to control the militia, the fleet, and taxation, for twenty years ; that he should take the Covenant himself, assent to its being forced on all his subjects, and order the persecution of all Romanists.* He was also to assent to the outlawing of his own chief supporters in the civil war.

Now Charles had declared long ago that he would never sacrifice his crown, his Church, or his friends, and in captivity he did his best to keep his vow. But his method was not to give a steady refusal, and bid his enemies do their worst. He answered their demands by long counter-propositions, flagrant evasions, and endless hair-splitting on every disputed point. Where he might have appeared a martyr, he chose to stand as a quibbling casuist. The Parliament kept him in easy and honourable confinement at Holmby House, in Northamptonshire, while the negotiations were in progress, and he was so carelessly guarded that he was able to keep up secret correspondence with all kinds of possible allies—the King of France, the Scots, and the chiefs of the Independent party.

But while king and Commons were haggling for terms, a new difficulty arose. The Presbyterian majority in Parliament were **Parliament** anxious to disband the army, both because of the **and the army.** expense of its maintenance, and still more because they knew it to be a stronghold of their enemies, the Independents. In March, 1647, they issued an ordinance for the dismissal of the whole force save a few regiments destined to suppress the Irish rebellion. But the "New-Model" refused to be dismissed ; it hated Presbyterians, and it had learnt to look upon itself as a truer representative of the Puritan party than an out-of-date House which had been sitting more than seven years. Instead of disbanding, the army began to organize itself for resistance, and each regiment named two deputies, or "agitators," as they were called, to form a central military committee. This was done with the approval of Fairfax and Cromwell, the leaders

* The children of the Romanists were to be taken forcibly from them, and educated as Presbyterians.

of the host. The movement was natural, but quite unconstitutional; still more so was the next step of the soldiery. An officer named Joyce, with the secret sanction of the agitators and of Cromwell also, rode to Holmby with 500 men, seized the king's person, and took him to Newmarket, where the head-quarters of the army lay.

Next the army marched on London, and encamped before its gates (June 16, 1647). Many Presbyterian members fled in dismay from the House of Commons, and the Independents got for a moment a majority in Parliament. The victorious party then proceeded to treat with the king, offering him liberal terms—the complete toleration of all sects, the restriction of the royal power over the armed force of the realm for ten years only, and a pardon for all exiled Royalists except five.

The Independents offer terms to Charles.

In a moment of evil inspiration the king refused this moderate offer. Encouraged by the quarrel of the Presbyterians and the army, he had formed a secret plot for freeing himself from both. His old partisans all over England had agreed on a simultaneous rising, and they had obtained a promise of aid from the Scots; for those stern Presbyterians so hated the Independents and the English army, that they were prepared to join the king against them. On the 11th of November, 1647, Charles slipped away from his military captors, and succeeded in escaping to the Isle of Wight. Hammond, the governor of the island, kept him in security at Carisbrooke, but did not send him back to the army. From Carisbrooke, the king sent new offers of terms of accommodation both to the army and the Parliament, but he was merely trying to gain time for his friends to take arms.

Charles's intrigues.

On the 28th of April, 1648, he saw his plot begin to work. A body of north-country Royalists seized Berwick, and raised the royal standard. A few days later the Scots took arms and raised a large force, which was placed under the Duke of Hamilton, and ordered to cross the Border. At the same time a committee of Scots lords sent to France for the young Prince of Wales, and invited him to come among them and put himself at the head of his father's friends. The movement in Scotland was a signal for the general rising of the English Royalists. Insurrections broke out in May and June all

Renewal of the war.

over the land—in Wales, Kent, Essex, Cornwall, and even among the Eastern Counties of the “Association,” where Puritanism was so strong.

For a moment it looked as if the king would win. It seemed that the army would be unable to cope with so many simultaneous risings. But Charles had not calculated on the military skill which Fairfax and Cromwell could display in the hour of danger. In less than three months’ hard fighting the two generals had put down the whole insurrection. Fairfax routed the Kentishmen—the most dangerous body of insurgents in the South—by storming their stronghold of Maidstone. Then, crossing the Thames, he pacified the Eastern Counties, and drove all the insurgents of those parts into Colchester. In Colchester he met a vigorous resistance; the town held out for two months, and only yielded to starvation (August 27, 1648).

Meanwhile Cromwell had first struck down the Welsh Royalists, and then ridden north to oppose the Scots. The Duke of Hamilton had already crossed the Tweed, and had been joined by 4000 or 5000 Yorkshiremen. He moved southward, intending to reach Wales, but in Lancashire Cromwell caught him on the march, with his army spread out over many miles of road. Falling on the scattered host, Cromwell beat its rear at Preston (August 17); then, pressing on, he scattered or captured the whole army in three days of fierce fighting, though his force was far inferior in numbers to that of the enemy. But the imbecile Hamilton had so dispersed his men that he never could concentrate them for a battle. On August 25 the duke, with the last wrecks of his army, surrendered at Uttoxeter.

The second civil war thus ended in utter disaster to the king’s friends. Moreover, it had sealed the fate of Charles himself.

There arose a large party among the victors who were determined that he should be punished for the reckless intrigue by which he had stirred up the dying embers of strife, and set the land once more aflame. The temper of the army was so fierce that, for the first time since the war began, numerous executions followed the surrender of the vanquished Royalists. The Duke of Hamilton, who had led the Scots; Lucas and Lisle, who had defended Colchester;

English
Royalists
suppressed.

Battle of
Preston.—The
Scottish army
dispersed.

Execution of
Royalist
leaders.

Lord Holland, who had been designated to command the Royalists of the south, all suffered death. Hundreds of prisoners of inferior rank were sent to serve as bondmen in the plantations of Barbados.

Charles himself was removed from Carisbrooke—he had made two unsuccessful attempts to escape from its walls—and put under strict guard at Hurst Castle. The Parliament still continued to negotiate with him, Pride's Purge.
—The Rump. only making its terms more rigorous. But the army did not intend that any such agreement should be concluded. While the House of Commons was still treating, it was subjected to a sudden military outrage. Colonel Pride, a leading Independent officer, marched his regiment to Westminster on the 6th of December, 1648, and, as the members began to muster, seized one by one all the chiefs of the Presbyterian party. Forty-one were placed in confinement, ninety-six were turned back and warned never to come near the House again. Only sixty Independent members were allowed to enter, a body which was for the future known by the insulting name of “the Rump,” as being the “sitting part” of the House.

Thus ended the famous Long Parliament, destroyed by the military monster which it had itself created. The “Rump,” a ridiculous remnant, the slave of the soldiery, was alone left to represent the civil power in England.

The king's fate was now settled. The army had resolved to punish him, and the Parliament was to be the army's tool. On December 23, the members of the Rump passed Trial of the
king. a bill for trying the king. On January 1, 1649, they voted that “to levy war against the Parliament and realm of England was treason,” and appointed a High Court of Justice to try the king for that offence. When it was seen that the king's life as well as his crown was aimed at, many of the leaders of the Independents, both military men and civilians, began to draw back. Fairfax, the chief of the whole army, refused to sit in the High Court, and of 135 persons designated to serve in it, only some seventy or eighty appeared. But the majority of the army, and Cromwell, the guiding spirit of the whole, were determined to go through with the business. The High Court met, with an obscure lawyer named Bradshaw as its president; its ranks were packed with military men, who

were blind to all legal considerations, and had come merely to condemn the king. Charles was brought before the court, but refused to plead. Such a body, he said, had no right to try a King of England—it was a mere illegal meeting, deriving its sole authority from a factious remnant of a mutilated House of Commons. This was undoubtedly true, and, considering the temper of his judges, the king knew that all defence was useless. The course that he took was the only one that suited his dignity and conscience. While he stood dumb before his judges, they passed sentence of death upon him (January 26, 1649).

Four days later he was led to execution on a scaffold placed before the windows of Whitehall Palace. He died with a calm dignity that amazed the beholders. He was suffered
His execution. to make a short speech, in which he bade the multitude remember that he died a victim to the “power of the sword,” that the nation was now a slave to the army, and that it would never be free again till it remembered its duty to its God and its king. He must suffer, he said, because he would not assent to the handing Church and State over to “an arbitrary sway ;” it was this that his captors had required of him. Finally, he said, he died a Christian according to the profession of the Church of England, which he had always striven to maintain. Then he laid his head upon the block and met the axe with unflinching courage, amid the groans of the people.

The hateful illegality of the king’s trial, the violence of his enemies, and the dignity of his end have half redeemed his memory. In our dislike for those who slew him
Was his fate deserved? we almost forget his offences. But when we condemn his slayers we must not forget their provocation. Charles had ground the nation under his heel for eleven years of tyranny. He had involved it in a bitter civil war that lasted four years more. Then, when he fell into the victors’ hands, he wasted two years in shift and evasive negotiations, which he never intended to bring to an end. Finally, from his prison he had stirred up a second and wholly unnecessary civil war. Contemplating these acts, we must allow that he brought his evil end upon himself ; violent and illegal as it was, we cannot say that it was undeserved.

The king’s execution was immediately followed by the proclamation of a republic. The Independents and the army

wished to be rid of the monarchy, no less than of the person of Charles. Accordingly a sweeping series of bills, passed in February, 1649, declared England a "Commonwealth," and vested its government in a single House of Commons and a Council of State. The House of Lords was abolished; of late it had been little more than a farce, for not a dozen peers had been wont to attend. But the "Rump," which now assumed to be the representative of the Commonwealth of England, was itself hardly more than a mockery. It never permitted the victims of "Pride's purge" to return to its benches, so that it was nothing better than a factious minority, depending on the swords of the army

The Rump and the army were masters of England, but in Scotland and Ireland they were as yet powerless. Ireland was entirely in the hands of the Catholic confederates, save the two towns of Dublin and Londonderry. Scotland had never laid down its arms after Preston; there was no republican party north of the Tweed, and when the news of the king's execution arrived, it only led the Scots to proclaim his son the Prince of Wales, under the name of Charles II.

Unless England, Scotland, and Ireland were to part company, and relapse into separate kingdoms, it was obvious that the new government must try its sword upon the lesser realms. This it was fully prepared to do. In the spring of 1649 an expedition for the conquest of Ireland was ordered, and the command of it was given to the formidable Cromwell, who since the king's death had become more and more the recognized chief of the army, Fairfax having stepped into the background. Before the expedition sailed, however, Cromwell had no small trouble with his soldiery. The bad example which the generals and colonels had set in driving out the Long Parliament and overturning the monarchy, had turned the rank and file to similar thoughts. There had grown up among them a body of extreme democratic republicans, called the Levellers, from their wish to make all men equal; they were mostly members of obscure and fanatical sects, who looked for the triumph of the saints and the coming of the millennium. While the army was preparing for the Irish war, the Levellers broke out into open insurrection, demanding the dismissal of the "Rump," the introduction of annual Parliaments, the abolition

The Common-
wealth.

Scotland and
Ireland.

Preparations
for war.—
Mutiny of the
Levellers.

of the Council of State, and the grant of "true and perfect freedom in all things spiritual and temporal." The zealots, however, were weaker than they imagined, and their mutiny was easily put down. Cromwell shot three or four of their leaders, and pardoned the rest of the band.

In August, 1649, Cromwell took over a powerful army to Ireland, where the civil war had never ceased since the rebellion eight years before. The remnant of the Anglo-Cromwell sub-
duces Ireland. Irish Royalists, under the Marquis of Ormonde, joined with the Romanists to oppose him, but their combined efforts were useless. So strong a man had never before laid his hand on Ireland. Starting from Dublin, the only large town in Parliamentary hands, he began by the conquest of Leinster. From the first he had determined to strike terror into the enemy. His stern veterans were capable of any extreme of cruelty against Romanists and rebels. But Cromwell is personally responsible for the two horrible blows that broke the Irish resistance. The enemy had made himself strong in the two towns of Drogheda and Wexford. Cromwell stormed them both, and forbade the giving of quarter, so that the whole garrison was in each case slaughtered to a man. Eight or nine thousand Irish perished, and such terror was struck into the rebels by these massacres that they made little more resistance. Cromwell had overrun half the island, when pressing need recalled him to England. He left part of his army under his son-in-law Ireton to complete the conquest, and hastily returned with the remainder (May, 1650).

The new danger was the Scottish war. Charles, Prince of Wales, had crossed to Scotland and put himself at the head of the national forces of the country. The unpur-
Prince Charles
in Scotland. pulous young man had taken the "Covenant," and professed himself a Presbyterian to bind the Scots more closely to him. He suffered the execution of the gallant Marquis of Montrose, who had tried to raise a purely Royalist revolt in the Highlands, to pass without rebuke, and allied himself with the slayers of his friend. Charles was resolved to rouse the English royalists in his aid, and it was the news that he was proposing to cross the Tweed that called Cromwell home, for Fairfax had refused to lead an army against the Scots. Since the tragedy of January, 1649, he had lost his old confidence in the justice of the Puritan cause.

Cromwell entered Scotland in July, 1650, and beat a very superior army at Dunbar, owing to the bad generalship of his opponents Leven and Leslie (September 3). He then took Edinburgh, slowly and steadily conquered the whole of the Lowlands, and pushed on into the interior of Scotland. But next year, when he had won his way to Perth, he learnt that Prince Charles and the Scots army had slipped past him and entered England, trusting to rouse Lancashire and Wales to their aid. Cromwell followed with fiery speed, and caught the invaders at Worcester (September 3, 1651). His iron veterans once more carried the day; the Scots were beaten and dispersed. Prince Charles barely escaped, and wandered for many days in peril of his life, till faithful friends enabled him to cross England and take ship at Brighton. From thence he came safely to France.

Battles of
Dunbar and
Worcester.

The battle of Worcester, which Cromwell called "the crowning mercy," put a final end to the civil war. Scotland submitted, Ireland was thoroughly conquered by Ireton, and the Rump and the army stood victorious over the last of their foes. It now remained to be seen whether the three kingdoms could settle down into a united Commonwealth under their new conditions.

End of the
civil war.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

CROMWELL.

1651-1660.

AFTER the "crowning mercy" of Worcester fight, the rule of England lay nominally in the hands of its mutilated and dis-credited House of Commons, the representative of a mere fraction of the nation. But really the power to move the realm was in the hands of the army, which had made, and could as easily unmake, the mockery of representative government which sat at Westminster. And in the army Cromwell was growing more and more supreme; his old colleague Fairfax had sunk back into civil life; his mutinous subordinates the Levellers had been crushed; the colonels and generals who held power under him were for the most part his humble servants.

Cromwell had as yet no official post corresponding to his real omnipotence. He was commander of the army, and a member of the Council of State, but nothing more. His will, nevertheless, was the main factor in the governance of England.

It is time to say a few words of the character of this extraordinary man, whom we have hitherto seen merely as the heaven-sent leader of the Parliamentary armies, and the guiding spirit of the Independent party. Oliver was a county gentleman of Huntingdonshire, a man of religion from his youth up, and a prominent member of the Parliaments of 1628 and 1640. He was more than forty years old before he ever drew sword or put a squadron in battle array. No general save Julius Caesar ever started on a great military career so late in life. Cromwell himself aimed at being a reformer of the life and faith of the nation much more than a

soldier. He had taken to war because the times required it, but military power and military glory was not his end in life. He wished to see England orderly, prosperous, and free, according to his ideas of freedom in things spiritual and temporal. In religion his ideal was the Independent system, in which the state tolerated most forms of worship, and was itself committed to none. In things temporal he wished to see the realm ruled by a truly representative House of Commons, where every district should be represented according to its population. He had no patience for the existing House, in which a haphazard arrangement, dating back from the middle ages, gave no fair representation to England—where the vanished boroughs of Dunwich or Sarum had as many members as Yorkshire or Norfolk. If Cromwell had found a House of Commons that agreed with his views, he would have worked smoothly with them, and lived and died no more than their first servant.

Unfortunately, however, Cromwell's views did not happen to be shared by any large proportion of the nation. Half England was secretly Episcopalian ; a large proportion of the rest was Presbyterian ; among his own Independent party there were numberless sects and factions. In the constitution of England, then as now, there was no place for an over-great personality backed by a strong military force. But such a personage existed in Cromwell. The question now arose whether he would consent to see the land governed by men whom he despised, in ways of which he disapproved, or whether he would proceed to interfere. Interference would be unconstitutional ; but everything had been unconstitutional in England for ten years, and the temptation to use force was irresistible to a man who had strong political theories, a self-reliant temper, and 20,000 formidable veterans at his back. He could never forget that the "Rump" was the army's creature, and that it had been created to carry out the army's views. His very energy and conscientiousness were certain to drive him into illegalities. It is customary to reproach Cromwell with dissimulation and ambition, to make his whole career turn on a settled desire to make himself despot of England. This view entirely misconceives the man. It is far more correct to look upon him as a man of strong principles and prejudices, who was carried away by his desire to work out his programme, and who struck

Cromwell
driven into
illegality.

down—often with great violence and illegality—all that stood in his way. If he finally seized autocratic power, it was because he found that in no other way could he put his plans in practice. Power, in short, was for him the means, not the end. Unfortunately for his reputation, England has always objected to being dragooned into the acceptance of any programme or set of views, and if she would not accept the theories of a Stuart, the child of a hundred kings, it was hardly likely that she would acquiesce tamely in those of a simple country gentleman of Huntingdonshire; the fact that he was the finest general of the seventeenth century did not make him an infallible law-giver.

When Cromwell came back victorious from Worcester field, the small and one-sided House of Commons which had ruled England since Pride's purge was still supreme in the state. Before he had been three weeks in London, Oliver hinted to the members that it was time that they should dissolve themselves, and give place to a freely elected house, where every shire and borough should be represented. Such a house had not been seen since 1642, when the Royalist third of the Commons had seceded at the king's command. But the "Rump" had enjoyed its two years of power, and had no wish to disperse. It was gradually growing to believe itself to be an irresponsible oligarchy with no duties to the nation, and to forget that it purported to represent England. When the question of dissolution was mooted, it proceeded to fix a date three years off as a suitable time for its own suppression, making the excuse that it must recast the constitution of the realm before it dispersed. This gravely vexed Cromwell and all the friends of reform; still more was their anger raised when the members proceeded to waste month after month in fruitless legal discussions, without succeeding in passing any bill of importance.

Meanwhile the country had become involved in a foreign war. All the powers of Europe looked unkindly upon the regicide Commonwealth of England, and its envoys were maltreated at more than one court. Two were actually murdered—Anthony Ascham at Madrid, Isaac Dorislaus, at the Hague; in each case the slayers were exiled English Royalists, and the foreign government gave little or no satisfaction for the crime. While English

**Pretensions of
the "Rump."**

**Foreign rela-
tions.—Rivalry
with the
Dutch.**

relations with Spain remained strained, those with Holland gradually grew to an open rupture. The Dutch had been interested in the Royalist cause because their stadtholder, William II., Prince of Orange, had married Mary, the eldest daughter of Charles I., and had sheltered the Prince of Wales at his court for many months. It was from Holland, too, that the Royalists had received their supplies of arms during the war. But there was more than this recent grudge in the ill-feeling between English and Dutch. They had grown of late to be rivals in the trade of East and West. Their merchants in the Spice Islands had come to blows as early as 1623, and in America the Dutch had planted the colony of "New Amsterdam," so as to cut the connection between Virginia and New England, as far back as 1625. At present they were competing for the carrying trade both of the Baltic and the Mediterranean.

Hence it was that when the indignation of the Parliament against the Dutch came to a head, it found vent in the celebrated Navigation Act (1651). This bill provided that goods brought to England from abroad must be carried either in English ships, or in the ships of the actual country that grew or manufactured them. Thus the Dutch carrying trade would be severely maimed. It was not a wise bill, or one in accordance with the laws of political economy, but it suited the spirit of the times, and even the usually clear-headed Cromwell gave it his support. This obvious blow at Dutch interests led, as was intended, to war (July, 1652).

In the struggle which followed, the English fleets were generally successful. Led by Robert Blake, a colonel of horse who became for the nonce an admiral, and showed no mean capacity in his new employment, they obtained several victories. The conflict was not without its vicissitudes, and on one occasion the Dutch Admiral Van Tromp won a battle, and sailed down the Channel with a broom at his masthead, to show that he had swept the seas clean. But his triumph was not for long; next spring Blake beat him in a fight off the North Foreland (June 3, 1653), and a final victory off the coast of Holland, in which the gallant Dutchman was slain, completed the success of the English fleet. A treaty followed in which the vanquished enemy accepted

The Navigation Act.

**Dutch War.—
Blake and
Van Tromp.**

the bitter yoke of the Navigation Act, and promised to banish the Stuarts from Holland. This they did with the better grace because the republican party among them had just succeeded in excluding the House of Orange from the stadtholdership. The Orange interest, therefore, could no longer be exerted in favour of the exiled royal family of England (1654).

But ere the Dutch war had come to an end, there had occurred a sweeping political change in England. The "Rump"

Discontent with Parliament. Parliament had persevered in its unwise courses ; it had carried no reforms, either in Church or State, but spent all its time in profitless debating.

Nor had it improved its popularity in the country by raising taxes by a new system which recalled the "tallages" of John or Henry III. Making lists of all who had taken the Royalist side in the old civil war, it imposed heavy fines on them, for offences of six or seven years ago. The army began to grow desperately impatient with the Parliament that it had made. In August, 1653, a great body of officers petitioned Cromwell, as their chief, to insist on the Commons dissolving themselves. Somewhat frightened, the House passed a bill for a dissolution, but with the extraordinary and preposterous claim that all sitting members should appear again in the next Parliament without having to seek re-election by their constituents.

This strange attempt to perpetuate themselves for ever provoked Cromwell's wrath to boiling-point. He resolved to take

Cromwell dissolves Parliament by force.

a step even more drastic than Pride's purge. On April 20, 1653, he went down to Westminster with a guard of musketeers, whom he left outside the door. Taking his seat as a private member, he presently arose and addressed his colleagues in a fiery harangue, in which he told them that they were a set of worthless talkers with no zeal for religion or reform. When shouted down by the angry Commons, he bade his soldiers enter, and thrust the dismayed politicians out of the door. The Speaker was hustled from his chair and Cromwell bade his men "take away that bauble," the great mace, which lay on the table and represented the dignity of the Commons of England.

Thus perished the last remnant of the mighty "Long Parliament," dissolved by the mere fiat of the great general. Nor did its fall cause much murmuring, for the nation had long ceased

to regard it as anything more than a body of garrulous and self-seeking oligarchs.

For the moment there was no legal government in England, for Cromwell's position was quite unconstitutional. He felt this himself, and was anxious to create a new House, which should work with him and carry out his ideas of reform; as yet he had no intention of becoming an autocrat. Accordingly, he summoned in June an assembly which differed from all that had been before it, since the members were not elected by the shires and boroughs, but named by a committee of selection, at which Cromwell presided. This illegally created body was called the "Nominee Parliament," or more frequently "Barebones' Parliament," from a London merchant with the extraordinary name of Praise-God Barebones, who was one of its prominent members.

But Cromwell was to find by repeated experiments that it was impossible for him to discover any body of men who could work with him on exactly the lines that he chose. For his own opinions were not those of the majority of the nation, and hence any assembly that he called was bound, sooner or later, to quarrel with him. And since he possessed in his army a weapon able to dissolve any number of parliaments, he was tempted to bring every quarrel to an end by abruptly dismissing the recalcitrant House. A less self-confident man, or one who did not think that he possessed a mandate from above to reform England, might have learnt to co-operate with a Parliament. But Cromwell was so sure of his own good intentions, and so convinced that those who questioned them must be wrong-headed and factious, that he drove away three parliaments in succession with words of rebuke and of righteous anger.

Barebones' Parliament, a body full of stiff-backed and fanatical Independents, soon proved too restive for its creator. Cromwell smiled on their first efforts, when they began to codify the laws and abolished the Court of Chancery. But he began to frown when this conclave of "the Saints," as they called themselves, commenced to speak of confiscating Church-tithes—the maintenance of the clergy—and the rights both of state and of private patronage to livings. It is even said that they wished to substitute the Mosaic law from the Book of Deuteronomy for the ancient law of England. This drew down a rebuke from

Cromwell, whereupon the House very nonestly gave their power back into the hands from whence they had taken it, and dissolved themselves (December, 1653).

The dispersion of this unconstitutional assembly was followed by another experiment in illegality. Cromwell published a paper-constitution drawn up by himself, called *The "Instrument of Government."* This provided that England should be governed by a "Lord Protector" and a House of Commons. Cromwell himself, of course, took the post of Protector, which was to be held for life, and had a quasi-royal character, for it was he who was to summon and dissolve Parliaments, and his assent was required to all bills; but it was stipulated that "the Protector should have no power to reject such laws as were themselves in accordance with the constitution of the commonwealth"—a vague check, since he himself would have to decide on the legality of each enactment. The new House of Commons was a fairly constituted body, for it included members from Scotland and Ireland, and among the English seats all the "rotten boroughs" were disfranchised, while their members were distributed among the rising towns, such as Leeds, Liverpool, and Halifax, and the more populous counties. The Protector was to have no power of dissolving the Commons till they had sat five months at least (December 16, 1653).

For nine months Cromwell ruled as "Lord Protector" without any check on his power, for the Parliament was not to assemble till September, 1654. Pending its arrival, the Protector began to introduce many reforms; he recast the Courts of Justice, and introduced his favourite scheme for the government of the Church. This was the toleration of all Protestant sects, and the distribution of Church patronage among them by a committee of selection called "Triers." This body was only to inquire whether the candidate for a living was of a good life, and held the essential doctrines of Christianity. It was not to inquire whether he was Presbyterian, Independent, or Episcopalian; only Romanists were formally excluded. But, unfortunately for the content of the land, Cromwell's ordinance that the old Church of England Prayer-book was not to be used, effectually prevented any conscientious Episcopalian from applying to the "Triers,"

Cromwell Lord
Protector.—His
reforms.

The Churchmen could only meet by stealth to celebrate their sacraments, and they formed at least half the nation. Cromwell's well-meant arrangements were gall and bitterness to them, and discontent was always rife.

Cromwell's New-Model Parliament met on September 3, 1654, the third anniversary of Worcester fight. It was a body that well expressed the wishes of the Puritan half of the nation, but the Royalists were, of course, excluded. The sense that it was a strong and representative body made it confident and haughty; it at once began to discuss the legality of the "Instrument of Government," and to pass bills restricting the Protector's power. Cromwell with some difficulty kept his temper for the statutory five months, and then dissolved it (January 22, 1655).

The New-
Model Parlia-
ment.

Once more the Lord Protector was left alone as autocrat of Great Britain. He was not happy in the position; the dissolution of the New-Model Parliament had angered Independents and Presbyterians alike. They murmured that a despotic Protector was no better than a despotic King. Conspiracies began to be formed against Cromwell, both by Royalists and extreme republicans. Some were for open rebellion, some for secret murder, for autocrats are easy to make away with. No one save Guy Fawkes ever tried to slay a whole Parliament, but the power of the individual despot is often tempered by assassination. Cromwell promptly got the better of a few wild spirits who tried to raise open war, for the army was still devotedly loyal to him. But his spirit was sorely tried by the assassination plots; the pamphlet which Colonel Sexby, the Leveller, published, under the title of *Killing no Murder*, especially incensed him. For the future he went on his way resolute, but nervously expecting a pistol-shot from every dark corner.

Autocracy of
Cromwell.—
Attempted
assassination.

For eighteen months after the dissolution of the New-Model Parliament Cromwell ruled as autocrat without any House of Commons to check him (January, 1655, to September, 1656). This time he tried another unconstitutional experiment for the governance of the realm. He divided England into twelve districts, and set over them twelve major-generals picked from the army, whose despotic power replaced that of lords-lieutenant and

Military despo-
tism estab-
lished.

sheriffs. This expedient made even more evident than before the fact that the army was holding down the nation by force, and provoked much adverse comment. As a matter of fact, Cromwell's rule, though utterly illegal, was very efficient. He gathered around him many capable men: the poet Milton—though a convinced republican—served as his foreign secretary; Thurlow, a very able man, was his Secretary of State. Both Monk, who governed Scotland, and Henry Cromwell, the Lord-Deputy of Ireland, the Protector's youngest son, were skilled administrators; and Blake, who had charge of the fleet, was the greatest admiral that England had yet seen. But no amount of good governance suffices to content a nation held down by armed force against its will, and Cromwell's rule could never be popular.

It was, however, successful and glorious, both in neighbouring lands and far abroad, if it was hated at home. Scotland was orderly and prosperous; Cromwell had much in
Scotland and Ireland. common with the Covenanters, though he had suppressed them so sternly, and after 1651 there was not much opposition to him. In Ireland the matter was very different; Cromwell loathed Romanists with the hatred of the old Protestants of the Elizabethan age. His scheme of government for that realm was the drastic and cruel expedient of thrusting all the native Irish into the single province of Connaught, and of dividing up the rest of the land among English and Scots settlers, just as Ulster had been treated in the time of James I. The expulsion was carried out with merciless rigour, and thousands of Cromwell's discharged veterans and other colonists were planted in Munster and Leinster. But the settlement was only to be a very partial success; the old soldiers did not make good farmers in a pastoral country, and the native Irish gradually crept back to act as the servants and labourers of the conquerors, so that a homogeneous English and Protestant colony was never established. When the Protector died a few years later, many of the colonists departed, others were merged in the Irish masses, and only in limited districts did traces of his cruel work survive. But the "curse of Cromwell" remained the bitterest oath in the Irish peasant's mouth.

Master of Great Britain, the Lord Protector resolved that this country should resume the great place in the counsels of

Europe which it had held in the time of Elizabeth. His foreign policy was the same as that of the great queen—resolute opposition to Spain as the foe of Protestantism and the monopolist of the trade of the Indies. In 1655 Cromwell declared war on Philip IV., and sent forth his fleets under Blake to prey on the Spaniards. The great admiral stormed the strongly fortified harbour of Teneriffe, in the Canary Islands, and sent home several silver-laden galleons from America which were lying therein (April, 1656). After several other successes he died at sea, just as he was returning to England. Another expedition under Venables captured the fertile island of Jamaica, in the West Indies, though it failed to get possession of the larger and stronger island of San Domingo. On the European continent Cromwell allied himself with France, the eternal enemy of Spain, and sent a strong brigade of his formidable regulars to aid the troops of the young Lewis XIV. This force much distinguished itself in the war, and won the ports of Dunkirk and Mardyke in Flanders (1657-58), which by agreement with the French were kept as English possessions. At this time Cromwell's arm reached so far that he was even able to interfere to prevent the Duke of Savoy from persecuting his Protestant subjects the Waldenses (1655), an event which called forth Milton's celebrated sonnet, commencing—

Cromwell's
foreign
policy.

"Avenge, O Lord, thy slaughtered saints, whose bones
Lie scattered o'er the Alpine valleys cold."

But though victorious abroad, the Lord Protector was still vexed that he could not build up a stable constitution at home. In the midst of his successes he summoned his third and last Parliament in September, 1656. He had now resolved to experiment in the direction of restoring many of the time-honoured arrangements of the monarchy. He had determined to create a second chamber, like the old House of Lords, and to assimilate his own position as Protector to that of the old kings. By excluding from election about a hundred persons who had been active in the Parliaments of 1653 and 1654, he obtained a House of Commons somewhat more docile than either of his earlier assemblies. In an address called "the humble Petition and Advice," they besought him to assume all the old prerogatives

Constitutional
experiments.—
A House of
Lords.

of royalty, and even the name of king. The last he refused, knowing the discontent it would arouse among his sternly republican followers in the army. But he accepted a status which gave him all that the regal name would have implied. At the same time he endeavoured to make his position less unconstitutional, by abolishing the major-generals, and giving the Commons complete control over taxation. But even with this loyal and obedient house the Lord Protector could not long agree. They fell out upon the question of the setting up of his new House of Lords, a body whose authority they utterly refused to acknowledge. On this point the Commons proved so recalcitrant that Oliver dissolved them after they had sat sixteen months (January, 1658).

This would not have been the last of his constitutional experiments if his life had been spared. But in the summer of the same year, while designs for a new Parliament were already being mooted, he was taken ill. His health had been broken by the constant nervous strain of facing perpetual assassination plots, and wrangling with refractory Parliaments. He died on September 3, 1658, the seventh anniversary of the "crowning mercy" of Worcester.

He left England great and prosperous, but discontented and unhappy. An autocrat, however well meaning, is never pardoned if he fails to understand and obey the feeling of the nation. Oliver was so much out of sympathy with the majority that he could not escape bitter hatred. Therefore all his work was built on the sand, and all that he had accomplished vanished with his death, save the mere material gains of commerce and colonies that he had won for England. His name, very unjustly, became a by-word for ambition and religious cant. A whole generation had to pass before men dared speak well of him.

The moment that Cromwell died, his system began to break up; in six months it had disappeared; in eighteen months England once more was ruled by a Stuart king. The Lord Protector had named no successor, but the Council of State took the step of nominating his son Richard to his place, as being the man who would divide parties the least. Richard Cromwell was an easy-going country gentleman, without any of his father's characteristics. He was neither self-confident, nor a soldier, nor a man of fervent religion. When

Death of
Cromwell.

Richard Crom-
well Protector.

saluted as Protector, he observed that he would never make anything more than a fair chief-constable. He bore himself modestly and discreetly, and proceeded at once to endeavour to put himself right with the nation by calling a Parliament. It met in January, 1659, and was found to contain many concealed Royalists, and many more stiff republicans of the old Presbyterian type, who objected on principle to the protectorship. Such a body was bound to fall into internal quarrels; all parties in it concurred in treating the unfortunate Richard with disregard.

But it was not the Parliament which was to upset the new Lord Protector. The army saw that with Oliver's death their old power was gone, for neither Richard nor the two Houses had any sympathy with them. A council of officers met, and resolved to seize control of affairs. They petitioned for the appointment of a general-in-chief who should represent them and act as their leader. When this was refused, a deputation of colonels called on the weak Richard, and hectored him, by threats of violence, into dissolving Parliament (April, 1659). Equally unwilling and unable to become a military autocrat, the Lord Protector immediately after resigned his office, and went off in joy to his quiet country seat of Hursley. He lived there as an obscure squire for more than forty years, and survived till the reign of Queen Anne.

Richard and
the army.—
He resigns.

England was now without a Protector and without a Parliament, left in the hands of a ring of ambitious and fanatical military men. Looking round for the fittest tool to serve their purposes, the committee of officers resolved on restoring the old "Rump Parliament" which had disappeared so ignominiously six years before. Accordingly, they sought out the Independent members who had once sat in that body, and restored them to Westminster Hall. Forty survivors under Speaker Lenthall took their old places, and claimed to be the governing power of England (May 9).

Revival of the
"Rump."

Of all the bodies which had ever ruled England, the "Rump" had been the most incapable and the most despised. The whole nation was indignant at seeing its miserable remnant replaced in power. Meanwhile the officers began to fall out with each other: Lambert, Fleetwood, Desborough, had each his party among

Quarrels of
the military
leaders.

the soldiery, and aspired to fill Oliver's vacant place. Eight months of anarchy followed; the various generals bullied the Parliament, and intrigued against each other. Royalist risings took place in Cheshire and the West. Finally Lambert, the most vigorous of the military men, entered London with his regiments and drove out the Parliament, just as Oliver had done six years before. But Lambert was no Cromwell; he only ruled a fraction of the soldiery, and had no party among the people (October, 1659).

The divisions of the army had at last broken the formidable military power which had so long repressed the wishes of the nation. Commonwealths and Protectors had been tried in the balance and found wanting. There was a general feeling that the only way out of anarchy was the restoration of the old constitution of England, with King, Lords, and Commons. The majority even of the original Parliamentarians of 1642 were ready to acknowledge that they had done unwisely, in breaking up the foundations of law and order by abolishing the monarchy. Calvinistic fervour had worked itself out; the majority of the old Puritans of the days of Charles I. had come to realize that Levellers, Fifth-monarchy men, and military saints were even more objectionable and impracticable than the Episcopalians whom they had once hated so sorely.

Meanwhile there was a man who saw clearly the one way to restore a stable government and to content the nation. George Monk, a calm, self-reliant soldier who commanded the army in Scotland, had resolved to use his regiments, on whose obedience he could implicitly count, to restore legal and constitutional rule. His own private ambition lay in the direction of a quiet and assured competence, not of an unsteady grasp on supreme power. He put himself secretly in communication with the exiled Prince of Wales and the chiefs of the English Royalists. No one else knew his design. Crossing the Tweed with 7000 men, he scattered the troops of Lambert and seized London. Then he summoned all the surviving members of the old "Long Parliament," as it had sat in 1642, to meet at Westminster, on the ground that it had been the last undoubtedly legal and constitutional government that England had possessed. The members met, now for the most

part elderly men, cured of their old fanaticisms by ten years of military despotism, and ready for any reasonable compromise. By Monk's direction they issued writs for a new Parliament, and then formally dissolved themselves.

The new or Convention Parliament met on April 26, 1660; it was full of Royalists, who for the first time since the civil war dared show themselves and avow their opinions. Monk now openly began to negotiate with Prince Charles for a restoration of the monarchy, on the basis of oblivion of the past, and toleration and constitutional government for the future. The exiled Stuart promised these things in his "Declaration of Breda," though there were in his promises certain reservations, which cautious men regarded with distrust.

But the realm was yearning for repose and peace, and the Parliament accepted Charles's offer with haste and effusion. Lambert and a few fanatical regiments vainly attempted to struggle against the popular will, but Monk crushed them with ease. In May 1660, the Prince of Wales was formally invited to return and resume his hereditary rights. On the 29th of the month he landed at Dover, and was saluted as Charles II. by the unanimous voice of a rejoicing nation.

The Con-
vention Parlia-
ment.—Decla-
ration of Breda.

Return of
Charles II.

CHAPTER XXIX.

CHARLES II.

1660-1685.

CHARLES STUART, who now returned to fill the English throne, was a young man of thirty. He had spent the last fourteen years of his life in exile, the penniless guest of many unwilling hosts in Holland, France, and Germany. Save eighteen uncomfortable months passed in the camp of the Scottish Covenanters, none of the days of his manhood had been spent on this side of the sea. He was continental in his manners, thoughts, and life. He had picked up his personal morals at the French court, and his political morals from the group of intriguing exiles who had formed his wandering and impecunious court. He laughed at purity in women and honesty in men. He was grossly selfish and ungrateful. Knowing by long experience how bitter is the bread doled out by the exile's host, "how steep to climb another's stair," he had one fixed idea—"he would never," as he phrased it, "go on his travels again." He had resolved to stay in England at all costs, to enjoy the Promised Land, now, contrary to all expectation, fallen into his hands. Accordingly, he wished to get as much out of his kingdom as was compatible with the necessity of never offending the majority of the nation. His personal leanings lay in the direction of absolute power and Right Divine, but he was perfectly ready to sacrifice them to his prudence. If he had any religious bias, it led him in the direction of Romanism—a comfortable creed for kings—but he was quite prepared to pose as a zealous Anglican, just as during his stay in Scotland he had become a conforming Presbyterian.

Charles, though destitute of personal beauty—his features

were thin and harsh—had an affable address, a lively wit, and perfect manners. Supple and suave, he could make himself agreeable among any company. He had the careless good-humour that so often accompanies selfishness, and his character was too light and easy to make him a good hater. He was quite prepared to take to himself any allies who might appear, and to sell himself to any bidder whose terms were high enough.

Charles appeared in England as the representative of legality and constitutional rule, as the saviour of society who was to lay once more the foundations of peace and order, after ten years of military despotism. He was ready to accept just so much power as might be offered him, with the full intention of ultimately gaining as much more as he could safely assume. The “Convention Parliament,” with which he had at first to deal, was a cautious body, containing many elderly men, who had fought against Charles I. and only accepted his son because of the dismal experience of ten years of rule by military “saints.” The new king was therefore bound to be careful at first. Any unwise movement of opposition might upset his still unsteady throne.

Charles and the
Convention
Parliament.

The Parliament, however, was prepared to deal very liberally with Charles. They disbanded the old Cromwellian standing army. They granted him an annual revenue of £1,200,000 for life, to be raised from customs and excise. In return, the old vexatious feudal dues of the crown from reliefs, wardships, alienations, etc., were abolished. An amnesty was voted to all who had fought against the king in the old wars, with the single exception of those who had sat in the “High Court of Justice” of 1649, and been concerned in the execution of Charles I. Eighty-seven persons, of whom twenty-four were dead, came under this category. Of the survivors some score fled over-seas; the remainder were tried before a court of High Commission. Thirteen were executed,* twenty-five imprisoned for life, the rest punished with less rigour; at the same time the Earl of Argyle, the chief of the Scottish Covenanters, was executed at Edinburgh. The bodies of Cromwell, Bradshaw, and Ireton were ordered to be disinterred and gibbeted—an unworthy and uncomely act for which the spirit of the time is no sufficient excuse.

* General Harrison and nine other members of the court, Colonels Axtell and Hacker, who had superintended the execution, and Sir Henry Vane, though he was not an actual regicide.

An "Act of Oblivion and Indemnity" was passed to cover acts of the governments of the last twelve years. It stipulated that Crown and Church lands which the Commonwealth had granted away should be restored by their present holders, who were not, however, to suffer any other penalty. Private lands were to be restored if they had been actually confiscated by the government, but not if they had been sold by the Cavalier owners under pressure of war or debt. Thus many who had served Charles I. to the best of their ability got no compensation from his son. Gratitude was not the new king's strong point.

There was a third problem on which the Convention Parliament found the gravest difficulty in arriving at an agreement—the settlement of the Church. The benefices of Eng-
The Church
question. land were at the moment in the hands of Presbyterian and Independent ministers of various shades of creed. Many of them had replaced incumbents of the Church of England thrust out by the Long Parliament. Others had succeeded in more peaceful wise. On the other hand, the extruded clergy of the old Church were claiming restoration to the cures from which they had been so ruthlessly ejected. What was to be done between the old holders and the new? Was the Church of England to be restored in all its ancient organization, and to become Anglican and Episcopal once more, or was it to be a lax organization including all manner of beliefs within its fold? The Parliament included many who were for "comprehension," and many who were pledged to a rigid restoration of the old order. It had been unable to come to any conclusion when it was dissolved in December, 1660. The king, however, had issued a declaration that a conference should be held between an equal number of Presbyterian and Episcopal divines, with the object of arriving at a compromise.

The new House of Commons which met in the spring of 1661 was a very different body from the "Convention." Elected in
The Cavalier
Parliament. the full flush of Royalist enthusiasm at the restoration of law and order, it contained a very small proportion of the old Roundhead party. Its members, young and old, were for the most part such zealous adorers of Church and King, that they received the name of the "Cavalier Parliament." Charles was ready to take all they cared to give him, while his prime minister Clarendon was a High Churchman,

and an advocate of hereditary divine right ; but even they found it necessary to restrain from time to time the exuberant loyalty of the Commons.

The "Cavalier Parliament" showed the blindest confidence in the king, whose real character his subjects had not yet discovered. They passed bills asserting the incompetency of the two Houses to legislate without the sovereign's consent, declaring that under no circumstances was it lawful to levy war against the king, and placing all the military and naval forces of the realm in his hands. The "Solemn League and Covenant," which had been the shibboleth of the old Roundheads, they ordered to be burnt by the common hangman.

These comparatively harmless beginnings were followed by a series of bills prompted by a spirit of unwise rancour against the men who had ruled England from 1648 to 1660. The Cavaliers had twelve years of spiritual and temporal oppression to revenge, and were determined to do as they had been done by. The Church settlement, which had been left pending by the Convention, they carried out in the most summary way. The king had promised that a meeting between divines of the old Church and Presbyterian ministers should be held, in order to endeavour to bring about a union. But the scheme came to nothing ; at the "Savoy Conference" of 1661, each side refused to move an inch from its position. The Parliament then proceeded to pass the "Act of Uniformity," to force the Puritans either to conform or to leave the Church. The Book of Common Prayer, slightly revised, and the Thirty-nine Articles were to be the rule of faith, and every minister was ordered to use and abide by them. Every incumbent was to declare his assent to them by August 24, 1662, or to vacate his benefice ; such was also to be the fate of all who refused to accept Episcopal ordination. This left the Puritan ministers three months to choose between conformity and expulsion—a longer shrift than they had allowed the Anglican clergy in the days of the triumph of Presbyterianism. The large majority of them conformed, and accepted Episcopacy and the Book of Common Prayer ; these men became the parents of the "Low Church" party of the succeeding age. The more stubborn souls refused obedience ; about 2000 of them were expelled from their livings on St. Bartholomew's Day, 1662. They and their followers are the

original progenitors of the dissenting sects of modern England. The extrusion of the Puritans was most thoroughly carried out, not only in the case of beneficed clergy, but in the Universities and schools. No University professor and no schoolmaster was to be allowed to teach, unless he got a certificate of orthodoxy from his bishop.

Not content with thrusting out the Puritan ministers from the livings they had held, the Parliament went on to legislate against the Puritan laity. The "Corporation Act" of 1661 enacted that all mayors, aldermen, and other office-holders in the cities and boroughs of England should, on assuming their functions, abjure the Covenant, take the oath of supremacy and allegiance to the king, and receive the Holy Communion according to the rites of the Anglican Church. Thus the Sacrament was made into a political test, a scandalous perversion of the Holy Table. This bill excluded all sectarians of the more conscientious and honest sort from municipal authority, but it also produced the unsatisfactory class of "occasional conformists," dissenters who took the oaths and the Communion according to law, but remained outside the Church.

Before passing on to matters outside the sphere of things ecclesiastical, we must mention two other persecuting bills passed, at a somewhat later date, by the "Cavalier Parliament." The "Conventicle Act" of 1664 forbade religious meetings of dissenters. Family worship was to be allowed, but if any number of persons more than five were present, beyond the members of the family, such a gathering was to be held a "conventicle," and the hearers to be punished. Lastly, the "Five-Mile Act" of 1665 forbade any minister who had refused to sign the "Act of Uniformity" to dwell within five miles of any city or corporate borough. It also prohibited such men from acting as tutors or schoolmasters, unless they took an oath "to attempt no alteration of the constitution in Church or State." These acts were purely vexatious and spiteful, as the Nonconformists were now completely crushed and harmless. Their numbers were already rapidly dwindling, and by the end of the century they did not number a fifth of the population of the realm. The vast majority of them had gone to swell the Low Church party within the Anglican establishment.

For the first seven years of the reign of Charles II., the days

of the "Cavalier Parliament," the chief minister of the realm was Edward Hyde, Lord Clarendon. He was a survivor from the days of the Long Parliament, being one of the original reforming members of that body who had gone over to the royal side when the Puritan majority commenced to attack the Church. He had been one of the wiser and more moderate councillors of Charles I., and had followed Charles II. all through the days of his exile. His daughter, Anne Hyde, had married James, Duke of York, the king's brother. Fourteen years of exile had put him somewhat out of touch of English politics, and his political ideals were more like those of the Elizabethan monarchy than those of his own day. He was an honest and capable, but not a very strong man. All through his life he preserved the theories which had guided him in the early days of the Long Parliament, wishing to keep a balance between the royal Prerogative and the power of the two Houses. Of course he failed to satisfy either king or Parliament. Charles thought that he was not so zealous a servant as he might have been; while the advocates of stringent checks on the monarchy thought him too subservient to his master. Clarendon was a strong Churchman, and must bear his share of the responsibility for the iniquitous "Conventicle" and "Five-Mile" acts. In secular matters he was more judicious; he always opposed the attempts of the king or Parliament to slur over the "Act of Oblivion and Indemnity" and hunt down the adherents of the Commonwealth. In foreign affairs he was a strong advocate of the old Elizabethan policy of war with Spain and friendship with France, a system which was rapidly becoming very dangerous, owing to the growing preponderance of France under the vigorous and ambitious young king, Lewis XIV. The first sign of his views was the sale of Dunkirk, Cromwell's old conquest, to the French for 5,000,000 francs.

Clarendon's great fault was that he had no influence over his master, the king. He allowed Charles to develop his unworthy personal habits without remonstrance. The king filled both his palace and the public service with disreputable favourites. He neglected his amiable but unattractive wife, Catherine of Portugal,* and filled his court with a

Clarendon.

Profligacy of
the court.

* Only notable in British history because she brought the isle of Bombay as her dowry.

perfect harem of mistresses, whose sons he made dukes and earls. England had never seen shameless immorality in high places so rampant in any previous age. The king's companions and servants were, as might have been expected, men of scandalous life, and quite unfit for the offices into which he thrust them. The tone of the court had a profound and unhappy influence on the manners of the day. Never were the private vices displayed so unblushingly; as if in protest against the formal piety and bleak austerity of the days of the Puritans, England—or at least its governing classes—plunged into extravagance and evil living of all sorts. Drunkenness, profanity, thriftless luxury, gambling, duelling, shameless lust, were accounted no discredit. The literature, and more especially the drama, of the Restoration is coarse and foul beyond belief. Even great poets like Dryden felt constrained to be scurrilous when they wished to please. The days of the great civil war had brought out the sterner virtues of Englishmen; the Restoration and the reign of domestic peace were marked by the outburst of all the folly and lewd frivolity which had so long been dormant beneath the surface.

The chief political event of Clarendon's administration was the second Dutch war, a struggle into which the minister was forced somewhat against his will. It was an The Dutch war.—1665-67. unwise war, for, in spite of the fact that their commercial interests often clashed, England and Holland needed each other's aid against the dangerous and restless power of France. Narrow trade jealousy, however, sufficed to bring on a conflict which ended with little credit to England. The fleet was very unsuccessful at sea, not so much owing to its own fault, as to the unskilful hands of its admirals. Charles gave the command to two old military men—General Monk, the author of the Restoration, and Prince Rupert. These gallant cavalry officers were wholly unable to handle a fleet; they led their ships into battle, whatever the odds against them, and then left the day to be decided by hard fighting. At a great three-days' engagement in the Downs (January 1-2-3, 1666) Monk was totally defeated by the Dutch admiral, De Ruyter, and his ill-success was very insufficiently revenged by some predatory descents on the coast of Holland in the next autumn.

The days of the Dutch war were some of the most unhappy

that England has ever known. In the summer and autumn of 1665, the land was smitten with the worst outbreak of pestilence that it has ever suffered. The Plague.—
1665. The “Great Plague” raged in London with awful severity. The crowded and ill-built city, utterly destitute of any sanitary appliances, and foul with the accumulated filth of centuries, became a very hotbed of contagion. Whole streets and parishes were swept clear of their inhabitants by death or desertion; the clergy fled from their cures, the physicians from their patients. All who could escape removed into the country, and London in the late autumn looked like a city of the dead, the grass growing high in its streets. The great plague-pits by St. Martin’s-in-the-Fields and Mile-end had been filled one after another, as fast as they could be opened, with huddled bodies gathered in the dreaded death-cart. At least a hundred thousand persons perished; contemporary rumour named an even greater figure.

London had hardly recovered from the Plague, when in the next year it suffered a fresh calamity, the Great Fire. A chance conflagration, bursting out in the heart of The Fire in
London.—1666. the city, was carried west and north by a strong wind, and swept away two-thirds of the inhabited houses of the capital. All the great buildings of mediæval London perished in the flames, the old Gothic Cathedral of St. Paul’s, eighty-eight other churches, the Guildhall, the historic mansions of the nobility, the halls of the rich City Companies, hospitals, old monastic remains, all were swept away. Hence it comes that central London is poorer in ancient architectural monuments than many a country town. The popular dismay at such an unexampled catastrophe was so great that a rumour went abroad that the conflagration was no accident, but had been planned and spread by the Papists, who were believed capable of any enormity since the wild attempt of Guy Fawkes. The Great Fire was not without its benefits; it swept away for ever a thousand mediæval fever-dens, and allowed of the rebuilding of the city with wider streets and more direct communications. Perhaps we may add that it gave a unique opportunity to the great architect Christopher Wren, to display his talents in the new St. Paul’s and the many other churches which he was commissioned to rebuild.

London was hardly beginning to rise again from its ashes, when the Dutch war ended, in some disgrace, but no loss to **The Peace of Breda.** England. The English fleet had not recovered from the disaster in the Downs, for Charles II. had squandered on his palace and harem the liberal grants which Parliament made him to repair his navy. While the seas were unguarded, a Dutch squadron slipped up the Thames, burnt the English dockyard and ships at Chatham, and held the port of London blockaded for some days. But negotiations were already on foot before this disaster was suffered, and the Peace of Breda (1667) put an end to the war. The terms were less unfavourable than might have been expected; England modified the Navigation Act of Cromwell's day in favour of Holland, but kept the valuable conquest of New Amsterdam, a Dutch colony in North America, which lay between New England and Virginia. The settlement changed its name, and was called in the future New York, after the king's brother, James, Duke of York.

Just after the Peace of Breda, Clarendon lost his place as the king's chief minister. The disasters and mismanagement of the war were, very unjustly, imputed to him rather than to his master. **Fall of Clarendon** The Commons impeached him for permitting corruption among the public servants, and for wilfully misconducting the war. Bowing to the storm, he left England and dwelt in exile till his death.

No one was more glad than the king at Clarendon's departure. He filled the place of his well-intentioned, if narrow-minded, minister with a clique of his disreputable friends. **The Cabal.** This administration was called the "Cabal" (from *Cabala*, the Hebrew word for strange and occult knowledge), as being the depository of the king's secrets. The name became popular because it chanced that the initials of the names of the five men who formed it spelt the word "Cabal." They were Clifford, Arlington, Buckingham, Ashley, and Lauderdale. Lord Clifford and the Earl of Arlington were Romanists, a fact which brought much odium and suspicion on their doings. George, Duke of Buckingham, the son of the favourite of Charles I., a volatile, insincere man—

"Stiff in opinion, always in the wrong,
Was everything by starts, and nothing long,"

as Dryden wrote. He was the most profligate and unscrupulous man in England. Lauderdale, an ambitious Scottish peer, was a renegade Covenanter who had sold himself to the king for power. Anthony Ashley, Lord Shaftesbury, was also an old Roundhead, whose love of office and preferment had overcome his principles. He was an active, unscrupulous man, whose ready talents were only prevented from achieving greatness by his want of honesty and clear judgment.

In replacing Clarendon by the "Cabal," Charles had two objects. So far as he cared for anything beyond his own pleasures, he was set on attaining two ends which he knew to be hateful to the nation: one was to Policy of Charles. render himself independent of Parliamentary control; the other to secure toleration, and if possible predominance, in England for Romanism. He thought that his new ministers were sufficiently free from scruples to aid him in his projects.

His main helper in the scheme was to be his cousin Lewis XIV., the zealous champion of Roman Catholicism on the continent, and the most busy and ambitious Schemes of Lewis XIV. monarch that France had ever known. Lewis had already started on his long career of aggression against Spain, Holland, and Austria. He was set on seizing for himself the frontier of the Rhine, the dream of all French statesmen since his day. To achieve this, he wished to conquer the Spanish Netherlands—the modern Belgium—and the petty principalities of the middle and lower Rhine. At the same time he was set on striking a blow against Protestantism, whenever he had the chance, and most especially against the Protestant power of Holland—for the "United Provinces" were both republican and Calvinist, the two things that he hated most in the world.

After diverting suspicions from his object for a moment, by concluding a treaty of alliance with Holland and Sweden, which met with universal approval, the king began to The Treaty of Dover. broach his scheme. It was worked out in the iniquitous "Treaty of Dover" (May, 1670). By this Charles undertook to join Lewis in destroying Holland and dividing up the Spanish Netherlands. In return for this service he was to receive a subsidy of £200,000 a year from France, and to have the aid of 6000 French troops to crush any rebellion that might arise in England when he took in hand the great project of

restoring Catholic predominance in the realm. This last clause was only known to the king, and to Arlington and Clifford, the Romanist members of the Cabal. It was concealed from Lauderdale, Buckingham, and Shaftesbury, who only knew of the plan for the partition of Holland and the Spanish dominions.

Having concluded this iniquitous agreement with his cousin, Charles prorogued Parliament—he kept it from meeting for two years—and declared war on the Dutch, without any ostensible cause or reason. At the same time the French king launched a great army over his northern frontier, overran the Spanish Netherlands, and penetrated far into Holland. The Dutch were only saved from destruction by their desperate resistance. Their fleet fought a drawn battle with the English at Southwold, and staved off a naval invasion. Meanwhile the young William of Orange, the heir of the old stadtholders, saved Amsterdam from the French by breaking down the dykes and inundating South Holland. Driven back by the floods, the French had to evacuate their Dutch conquests (1672).

Meanwhile Charles began to carry out his agreement with Lewis for restoring Romanism, by issuing his “Declaration of Indulgence,” suspending all the penal laws which imposed penalties on Roman Catholics. To cloak his design, he made the proclamations cover Protestant Nonconformists, as well as dissidents belonging to the older creed.

But the king had miscalculated the feeling of England. The “Declaration of Indulgence” raised a storm about his ears which he dared not face. So wrathful were the Churchmen, Low Church and High Church alike, that he felt in serious danger of deposition. The Parliament met in February, 1673, and passed an address requiring the king to withdraw the “Declaration.” Charles felt his nerve give way; instead of standing his ground, and calling in his French auxiliaries, he yielded, and withdrew his edict of toleration. The Parliament then passed the “Test Act,” which excluded all Nonconformists, Protestant and Romanist alike, from all official positions. This made it impossible for Charles to retain his Catholic ministers, Arlington and Clifford, and caused the downfall of the Cabal, which went out of office in

the end of 1673. The Test Act also drove from his place as Lord High Admiral the king's brother James, who had become an avowed Romanist.

The failure of the king's schemes was still further marked by the conclusion of peace with Holland in February, 1674, and the appointment as chief minister of Thomas Osborne, Lord Danby, a good Churchman and an enemy of France. Determined "not to go on his travels again," Charles gave way on all points, to the deep disgust of his cousin of France, who despised him greatly for his craven desertion of the cause of Romanism.

Peace with
Holland.—
Danby chief
minister.

But the king had not really given up his design. He was quite ready to renew his alliance with France when the times should be more favourable. Meanwhile he was compelled to profess an attachment to Holland, and married his heiress, the Princess Mary, his brother James's daughter, to the young Prince of Orange, the sworn foe of France (1677). By such means he was able to keep himself safe, and to laugh at the efforts of the Low Church party in Parliament.

Marriage of
Princess Mary
and William of
Orange.

This faction, the "country party," as it called itself, was now headed by the unscrupulous adventurer Shaftesbury, who from being a minister had become the king's deadly enemy, and was trying to stir up trouble by warning the nation to beware of the Romanist and absolutist tendencies of his old master—of whose reality none had a better knowledge than himself.

Shaftesbury
and the
"country
party."

Danby was driven from office in 1678, owing to the discovery of some of the king's secret negotiations with France, to which he had been weak enough to give his assent for the moment, though his own views were opposed to the alliance with Lewis XIV. The French king knew this fact, and treacherously made the negotiations known, in order that Danby might be discredited, and replaced by a minister more suited to his tastes. His wily scheme was successful; Danby was hounded from office, impeached, and condemned to imprisonment in the Tower, though he produced the king's warrant for all he had done. But the Parliament voted that the king could do no wrong, and that a minister was responsible for all his acts, even when he acted under the strongest pressure

Fall of Danby.

from his master. Thus the theory of "ministerial responsibility" was fixedly and unequivocally proclaimed as part of the Constitution.

The fact that secret treaties with France were again in the air, gave Shaftesbury and his friends, the ultra-Protestants, a **Shaftesbury's schemes.** fine opportunity for a demonstration. Soon after Danby's fall, they raised a cry that the kingdom was in danger from a plot to restore Romanism by the aid of armed force from France. This was true enough, and the criminal was the King of England. But Shaftesbury did not strike at the king; he feared the loyalty of the Churchmen to the heir of Charles I., and thought that his sovereign was so supple and weak that he might be terrorized into becoming his instrument. The king was to be reduced to nullity, not removed.

When the cry against the Romanists was growing strong, there came forward a certain depraved clergyman named Titus **The Popish Plot.** Oates, who had been for a time perverted to Romanism, and had dwelt much with the Jesuits. He made himself Shaftesbury's tool, by declaring that he had gained knowledge of a great conspiracy against the peace of the realm. This "Popish Plot" was, he said, an agreement by a number of English Catholics to slay the king and introduce a French army into the realm in order to place James of York, the king's Romanist brother, on the throne. Now, it is probable enough that some of the accused were in correspondence with France, and letters were discovered from Coleman, secretary to the Duchess of York, written to friends abroad, which spoke of an approaching blow to the Protestant cause. But the blow was really to be dealt by Charles, not against him. It was he who was in truth conspiring to bring over the French and conquer his own realm by their aid.

Oates, however, perjured himself up to the hilt, bringing forward accusations against all the leading English Romanists, and hinting that even Queen Catherine herself **Popular panic.** was privy to a plot to murder her husband. Many minor informers also sprang up to corroborate the venomous tale of Oates. The nation was seriously alarmed. A perfect outburst of frenzy followed, and every Romanist in England was denounced as a disciple of Guy Fawkes. Charles, to his shame, pretended to take the story seriously, though none knew better than he its folly.

A new Parliament met in March, 1679 ; it was elected in the full flood of indignation against the "Plot," and Shaftesbury found that he could command a clear majority of its votes. He used his power to bring in a bill excluding the Duke of York, as an avowed Romanist, from the throne. To save his brother's rights, Charles dissolved the Commons before they could pass it. The only work that this Parliament had succeeded in carrying through was the *Habeas Corpus Act*, a very important enactment prohibiting arbitrary imprisonment without a trial. No man was to be kept in gaol untried, and penalties were imposed on the gaoler who should detain him, and the judge who should refuse to hear him plead. This principle required to be explicitly reasserted under the later Stuarts, though it is found formulated in Magna Carta itself.

The second Parliament of 1679 was, to the king's disgust, almost as much under the influence of Shaftesbury and the alarmists as the first. The nation was still in a ferment ; month after month prominent Catholics were imprisoned on the evidence of Oates and his gang, tried, and condemned to death. So great was the fear felt of the Romanist Duke of York, that a preposterous plan was formed by Shaftesbury and his friends to replace him as heir to the throne by the Duke of Monmouth, the eldest of the natural sons of King Charles. This was a manifest injustice to the Princess Mary, the Protestant daughter of Duke James. Her father's religion could not vitiate her rights. But Monmouth was a popular youth, of fair parts and abilities. He had won some military reputation by putting down a dangerous rebellion of the Scottish Covenanters, who had murdered the Archbishop of St. Andrews, risen in arms, and got possession of the Western Lowlands. After routing them at Bothwell Brig (June, 1679), Monmouth was saluted as a conquering hero, and rumours were put about that his mother, Lucy Walters, had been secretly married to the king. Charles himself hastened to deny this lie, but it had its effect, and a serious effort was made to substitute Monmouth for his uncle.

All through 1680 the struggle was at its height, though Shaftesbury was gradually losing ground, owing to the unwise violence of his conduct, and the growing disrepute of his tool,

Titus Oates, whose reckless falsehoods were beginning to be detected by sober men. The contest turned on Shaftesbury loses ground. the fate of the Exclusion Bill, which declared James incapable of reigning, and transferred his rights to his daughter Mary, the Princess of Orange, though many suspected that Shaftesbury intended to substitute Monmouth for the princess.

It is at this moment that the famous political names which were to rule England for the next century and a half come into sight. At first the opponents of the Exclusion Bill, the supporters of the divine right of hereditary succession, and the defenders of the Duke of York, were called "Abhorrrers," from the numerous addresses which they sent to the king declaring their abhorrence of the Exclusion Bill. On the other hand, the supporters of Shaftesbury, and the believers in the Popish Plot, were called "Petitioners," from the petitions which they kept signing in favour of the bill. But soon two less cumbrous, if stranger, names were found for the two parties. The "Abhorrrers" were nicknamed "Tories" by their enemies, from the appellation of a horde of banditti, who lurked in the bogs of Ireland. The Petitioners, on the other hand, were christened "Whigs" by their rivals, after the name of a fanatical sect of Scottish Covenanters. These titles, bestowed in ridicule at first, were finally accepted in earnest, and became the usual denomination of the two great parties.

The Exclusion Bill was passed by Shaftesbury and his majority of Whigs in the Commons, once in 1679, and once in 1680. But the House of Lords threw it out, and Charles dissolved the Parliament once and again, till in 1681 the fear of the Popish Plot began to blow over, and the violence of Shaftesbury to disgust the moderate members of his own party. The cruel execution, in December, 1680, of Lord Stafford, an old Romanist peer of blameless life, whose innocence was known to all, was the last and most damaging triumph of the Whigs. Its injustice caused many of Shaftesbury's supporters to fall away. His intrigues in favour of Monmouth, and the open support which he gave to the lying Oates, had ruined him.

In 1681 the king accused him of high treason for collecting armed followers to overawe Parliament. A London jury refused to convict him, and he plunged into still more desperate

courses. Conspiring with Lord William Russell and Algernon Sydney to raise rebellion, he was detected and fled over-sea to escape punishment. Some of his more desperate followers went on with his plot, which they developed into a plan for assassinating Charles as he passed the Rye House in Hertfordshire, on his way to Newmarket. The disclosure of this reckless conspiracy ruined the Whigs; the whole party was believed to have been privy to it, though it was in truth the work of a very small clique, headed by one Colonel Rumbold, an old Cromwellian officer (1682).

Fall of
Shaftesbury.—
The Rye-House
Plot.

The king, finding that public opinion was veering round to his side, was emboldened to strike a blow at the whole Whig faction. Mixing up the Rye-House Plot with Shaftesbury's abortive plans, he seized all their chief leaders, and had them tried for high treason.

Execution of
Russell and
Sydney

Subservient judges and a packed jury made their fall easy. Lord William Russell and Algernon Sydney were beheaded; Lord Essex committed suicide in prison. The evidence connecting Russell and Sydney with the assassination plot was trivial, and their execution little else than a judicial murder (1683).

Charles was now in a better position to carry out his long-concealed plan for the restoration of arbitrary government and the furthering of Romanism than at any previous time in his reign. He left Parliament unsummoned for more than two years, prepared to renew his alliance with France, endeavoured to collect a body of ministers who would second his views, and largely increased his standing army. He made several unconstitutional encroachments on the liberty of his subjects—such as forfeiting the charters of many cities, including London itself—and was cautiously feeling his way towards more decisive measures. But on February 6, 1685, his plans were suddenly interrupted by a fatal apoplectic stroke, which carried him off before he had attained the age of fifty-five. On his death-bed he had himself openly received into the Roman Catholic faith, of which he had so long been the secret partisan. It was fortunate that his schemes were brought to such an untimely end, for if a cautious foe to the liberties of England, he was a very clever and insidious one. Of the stubborn folly which ruined his successor, he would never have been guilty.

Death of
Charles.

CHAPTER XXX.

JAMES II.

1685-1688.

NO greater testimony to the caution and cleverness of Charles II. can be given than the fact that, after a reign of twenty-five stormy years, he died in possession of a very considerable measure of absolute power, having lived down his troubles, secured the devotion of the larger half of the nation, strengthened himself with a standing army, and dispensed for three years with any summons of Parliament.

His successor was to prove that a man without tact and pliability, pursuing the same schemes for the restoration of arbitrary government and Romanism, might wreck himself in three years and die an exile.

Yet James of York was in many ways a stronger and a better man than Charles II. He possessed conscience and courage in a far greater measure than his brother. His life
 Character of James. was not an open scandal ; his word could be relied upon ; his attachment to his faith was devoted and sincere. But he had three ruinous faults : he was obstinate to blindness ; long after a fact had become patent to all men, he would refuse to recognize its existence. He was full of a bigoted self-sufficiency that arose from an overweening belief in his own good intentions and wisdom. Lastly, he was a man unable to forgive or forget ; there was no drop of mercy in his composition ; he could understand nothing but the letter of the law. Blind, conceited, pitiless, he was bound to win the hatred of all who differed from him, and it was soon to be discovered that nine-tenths of the English nation were numbered in that class.

James was a man of business and method, as well as a man of

action. He had commanded a fleet with credit in the Dutch war ; he had presided with success at the Admiralty till he was compelled to resign that office by the Test Act. He had ruled Scotland for a time with a very firm, if a rigid, hand. But no amount of mere administrative ability could make up for his entire want of judgment, foresight, and geniality.

Yet on his accession, the new king had everything in his favour. The Tory party was still in the ascendancy which it had enjoyed ever since the Whigs had been dis-credited by the Rye-House Plot. It was resolved to trust and support James as long as he behaved in a constitutional manner, and had a strong confidence in his honesty. Accordingly, the king's first Parliament granted him the liberal income of £1,900,000 a year, and protested its complete reliance on his wisdom and good intentions. Nor was any objection made when James sought out and punished the informers who had fabricated the Popish Plot, though their chastisement was very barbarous. Oates, their chief, received 1700 lashes twice within forty-eight hours, yet survived, in spite of a sentence which had obviously been intended to kill him.

**The Tory
party.**

The first real shock to the confidence of the nation in the king was caused by the cruelty with which he put down an insurrection which broke out against him in the summer that followed his accession. The late king's bastard son, James, Duke of Monmouth, the tool of Shaftesbury in 1680, was living in exile in Holland, along with many violent Whigs, who were charged, truly or falsely, with participation in the Rye-House Plot. Monmouth, a vain and presumptuous young man, could not read the signs of the times, and thought that all England would rise to overturn a Romanist king, if only a Protestant leader presented himself to lead the people. Without securing any tangible promises of support from the chiefs of the Whig party in England, he resolved to attempt an invasion. He was to be aided by Archibald, Earl of Argyle, the exiled chief of the Scottish Covenanters, who undertook to stir up a rising among his clansmen in the Highlands.

**Rebellion of
Monmouth and
Argyle.**

Argyle landed in Scotland in May, 1685 ; Monmouth came ashore at Lyme, in Dorsetshire, in June. Each had brought a very small force with him, and relied wholly on the support

he hoped to find at home. Argyle raised the Campbells, but
 Argyle taken found none else to join him ; after a few days his
 and executed. men dispersed, and he was taken and beheaded.

Monmouth was at first more fortunate. He was well known
 and popular in Dorset and Somerset, and some thousands of
 Battle of countrymen came flocking to his banner, though
 Sedgemoor.— none of the gentry would adhere to such a reckless
 Monmouth executed. adventurer. The duke appealed to all Protestants
 to aid him against a Papist king, declared that his mother had
 been the lawful wife of Charles II., and claimed the crown of
 England. But his proclamation did him no good, and his army
 of ploughmen and miners was but a half-armed rabble. Never-
 theless, they fought bravely enough against James's regulars
 at Sedgemoor (July 5, 1685), and only dispersed when their
 leader fled in craven fear from the field. Monmouth was caught
 in disguise, and taken to London. He grovelled at the feet of
 James, and offered to submit to any indignity if his life might be
 spared. But the pitiless king, after chiding him for half an hour,
 sent him to the scaffold.

His fate provoked little sympathy, for he had clearly brought
 his trouble on his own head. But the cruel punishment that
 Kirke and was dealt out to the poor ignorant peasants who
 Jeffreys.— had followed him shocked the whole nation.
 "The Bloody Assize." Hundreds of rebels taken in arms were hung, or
 shot after a summary court-martial by the brutal Colonel Kirke,
 a veteran who had learnt ferocity by serving against the Moors
 in Africa. After the summary executions were over, Judge
 Jeffreys, a clever but worthless lawyer, whom the king made the
 chief instrument of his cruelties, descended on the south-western
 counties. In the "Bloody Assize," as his circuit was called,
 he put to death more than 300 persons, after the barest mockery
 of a trial, and sent 1000 more to work as slaves on the planta-
 tions of Jamaica and Barbados. Of all Jeffreys' judicial murders,
 the worst was that of the aged Lady Lisle. For having sheltered
 a fugitive from Sedgemoor, she was sentenced by this barbarian
 to be burnt, and he thought it an act of clemency when he
 commuted the penalty to beheading (September, 1685).

The ease with which he had crushed the rising of Monmouth
 and Argyle emboldened James to take seriously in hand the
 great project of his life, the restoration of Romanism. His plan

was to fill all offices in Church and State with open or secret Papists, and to overawe discontent by the muskets of a large standing army. That such a plan was dangerous, and even impossible, when nine-tenths of the nation was devotedly attached to Protestantism, he does not seem to have realized. He relied on his observations of the men about his own person, for many of the demoralized courtiers of Charles II. were quite ready to become Romanists if only it brought them preferment. They would probably have become Jews or Moslems if it had been made worth their while. The basest of these degraded opportunists was James's chief minister, Lord Sunderland, the tool of all his worst acts of tyranny and folly. With such a man as his chief adviser, and the infamous Jeffreys—now made Lord Chancellor—as his chief executioner, the king was likely to go to any lengths. Of his other councillors the chief were Richard Talbot, Earl of Tyrconnel, a bigoted Irish Romanist of very depraved manners, and Father Petre, a Jesuit priest.

The king's
Romanist
schemes.

James commenced his campaign against Protestantism in 1686. The chief bar to the admission of Papists to office in the public service and the army was the Test Act of 1673, which excluded all save English Churchmen from any post in the state. Knowing that no Parliament would repeal this act, James resolved to annul it on his own authority. One of the oldest weapons of the Stuarts was the claim to a "dispensing power," a right of the king to grant immunity on his own authority for offences against the law of the land. This was the tool which he had now resolved to employ against the Test Act. He appointed a Romanist named Sir Edward Hales colonel of one of the new regiments which he was busily employed in raising. Hales was prosecuted for illegally accepting the commission, and pleaded in defence that the king had dispensed him from taking the test. The case was brought before a bench of judges carefully packed by the orders of James, and they gave the wholly unconstitutional decision that the king's dispensation covered Hales from all penalties. Armed with this opinion of the judges, James began to give place and office to Romanists right and left; they were made judges, officers, sheriffs, lord-lieutenants, mayors, all by virtue of the king's dispensing power. None but Catholics could for the future hope for any preferment.

The Test Act
and the dis-
pensing power.

The king next proceeded to attack the Church of England ; once more pleading his dispensing power, he began to give **Attack on the Church and Oxford University.** Papists office in the Church. Not only did he make over crown livings to them, but he filled two vacant headships of Oxford colleges with notorious Romanists, showing thereby his intention to put the control of education into the hands of his own co-religionists. Somewhat later, he expelled the whole body of Fellows and Scholars of Magdalen College, for refusing to receive the President whom he had chosen for them [1687], herein following the example of Charles, who had deprived the philosopher John Locke of his studentship at Christ Church, for holding Whig opinions. To deal with things religious, James revived the Court of High Commission, one of the old despotic courts which the Long Parliament had abolished forty years before ; he placed Jeffreys at its head, and used it for the oppression of all clergy who showed signs of opposing him. Meanwhile a large army, including several Irish regiments, was concentrated at Hounslow to overawe London.

The nation, though sorely tried by these exhibitions of James's high-handed bigotry, required still further provocation before it rose against him. The Tory party were so deeply committed to the doctrine of divine right and passive obedience, that it required an even more desperate attack on the Church of England to set them in arms against the king. The Whigs were so crushed and depressed, that they had not the heart to rebel. It may be added that the fact that the king was an elderly man, while his heiress Mary, Princess of Orange, was a firm Protestant, kept many men quiet. They held that the king must die ere long, and that his wild schemes would die with him.

James began to embark on his last fatal measures of arbitrary power in the spring of 1688. Without calling or consulting a Parliament, he determined to issue on his own **The Declaration of Indulgence.** authority a "Declaration of Indulgence," which was to suspend all laws that were directed against Romanists. To partly cloak his plan, he added that the Declaration was also to free the Protestant Dissenters from the penal code of 1664-5. Toleration in itself is good, but toleration imposed by an autocratic and illegal mandate is a suspicious boon. The Dissenters themselves repudiated the gift, when

given from such doubtful hands. To show his complete mastery over the Church of England, James ordered that the Declaration should be publicly read from the pulpit by every beneficed minister in the land.

This command provoked even the loyal Tories to resistance. When the appointed day came round, the clergy, almost without exception, refused to read the Declaration. The archbishop, William Sancroft, and six of his suffragans,* addressed a petition to the king begging that they might be excused from having to issue such a document. James was furious, and in his rage declared his intention of putting the bishops on trial for publishing a seditious libel—a most absurd description of their modestly worded plea. The seven prelates were arrested and sent as prisoners to the Tower. A month later they were brought before the Court of King's Bench. The whole nation was in agony as to their fate, but the preposterous nature of the prosecution abashed even the king's subservient judges. The charge was pressed in a half-hearted way, and the jury returned a verdict of "Not guilty." James's vexation at this acquittal was only surpassed by his outburst of wrath when he saw the universal demonstration of joy with which the news was received. Even his own soldiery in the camp at Hounslow lighted bonfires to celebrate the event.

In the very month of the acquittal of the seven bishops, an event happened which profoundly affected the king's prospects. His young second wife, Mary of Modena, bore him a son, the prince afterwards known as "the Old Pretender" (June 10, 1688). The birth of this child gave the king a Romanist heir, and cut the Princess of Orange out of the succession to the throne. This unexpected news filled England with dismay; it was evident that the king's schemes were no longer to be terminated with his own life; a dynasty of Romanists loomed on the horizon. In their wrath many men asserted that the child was supposititious, a changeling foisted on the nation by the king's malice. This groundless tale received much credit, for anything was believed possible in such a bigot as James.

* Their names were Ken of Bath and Wells, White of Peterborough, Lloyd of St. Asaph, Trelawney of Bristol, Lake of Chichester, and Turner of Ely.

The birth of the Prince of Wales was immediately followed by the formation of a serious conspiracy to overthrow the king.

Invitation to
William of
Orange.

The Tories forgot their loyalty and joined the Whigs. The first sketch of the plot was drawn up by the old Tory minister, Danby, in conjunction with the Earl of Devonshire, the chief of the Whigs, and Henry Sydney and Edward Russell, the kinsmen of the two Whig leaders of those names who had been beheaded by Charles II. in 1683. Their plan was to call over to England the Princess Mary and her husband the Prince of Orange, and set them up against the king. William of Orange, the champion of Protestantism on the continent, and the deadly foe of James's ally, the King of France, was known to be ready to strike any blow that would bring England over to his side. He had long been in secret communication with many leading men among the Whigs, and welcomed the appearance of a definite invitation with joy. On receiving satisfactory assurances of support, he consented to raise every man that he could put into the field, and to cross to England.

James at first received the news of suspicious warlike preparations in Holland with indifference. He relied on the fact that William was at war with France, and reasoned that while the Low Countries were threatened by French troops, his son-in-law would never dare to leave his own country unprotected and invade England. But the French king was more set on an invasion of Germany than on the conquest of Holland, and when Lewis sent his armies across the Upper Rhine, William was left unwatched, and was able to make his preparations at leisure. Many Englishmen of mark, Tories as well as Whigs, slipped over to join him, and bade him strike as quickly as possible. Though the storms of autumn were already raging, the Prince set sail from Helvoetsluys on the 2nd of November, and steered down the Channel, with fifty men-of-war, and transports carrying some 13,000 men.

James had a much larger force garrisoning the south of England. Combining his regular army with a number of newly raised regiments of Irish Romanists, he had quite 40,000 men under arms. But he soon discovered that the temper of the greater part of them was very bad; except the numerous Catholic officers to whom he had given commissions, there was hardly a man who could be trusted.

When the news of William's final preparations reached England, James was suddenly struck by a panic as irrational as his previous over-confidence. He fell from ^{James reverses} blind arrogance into extreme depression, when he ^{his policy.} at last realized the universal discontent which his acts had created. With a craven and useless haste he suddenly began to endeavour to undo his policy of the last three years. He abolished the Court of High Commission, cancelled the appointments of many Romanist officials, recalled the Fellows whom he had banished from Oxford, and made the most profuse promises to respect all the rights and privileges of the Church of England for the future. But such conduct could not restore confidence ; he could not make men forget the cruelties of the Bloody Assize, or the indignities which he had heaped on the seven bishops. Such a repentance at the eleventh hour deceived nobody.

On the 5th of November, 1688, William of Orange landed at Torbay, and three days later he seized Exeter. James, who had looked for an invasion on the Eastern coast, at once began to march his numerous army towards Devonshire. There was a moment's pause ere the opponents met. For some days no one of note joined the Prince of Orange, and it seemed doubtful if those who had pledged themselves to his cause were about to keep their promise. But the hesitation was not for long. Ere a shot had been fired in the west, insurrections began to break out in all the parts of England where the king had no armed force in garrison. Lord Danby seized York and the Earl of Devonshire Nottingham. But this was not the worst ; as James advanced westward, first single officers, then whole companies and regiments, began to slink away from his host and join the enemy. Even those whom he most trusted left him ; his own son-in-law, Prince George of Denmark, the husband of his younger daughter Anne, was one of those who absconded. Another was one of his most trusted officers, John Churchill, afterwards the famous Duke of Marlborough. With abominable treachery, Churchill tried to kidnap his master before deserting, and almost succeeded in the attempt.

Landing of
William of
Orange.—
James
deserted.

Seeing his whole army melting away, James hastily returned to London, strove in vain to gain time by negotiating with the

Prince of Orange, and then sent off his wife and son to France, James flies to and endeavoured to follow them himself. He France. was stopped by a mob at Faversham, in Kent, and forced back to the capital. But no one wished to keep him a prisoner, and, with the secret connivance of William of Orange, he was allowed to escape a second time, and to get clear away to France (December 18, 1688).

Thus ended in ignominious flight the preposterous attempt of a blind and arrogant king to coerce England into surrendering its constitution and its religion. The edifice which James had so laboriously reared, crumbled to pieces at the first touch of force from without.

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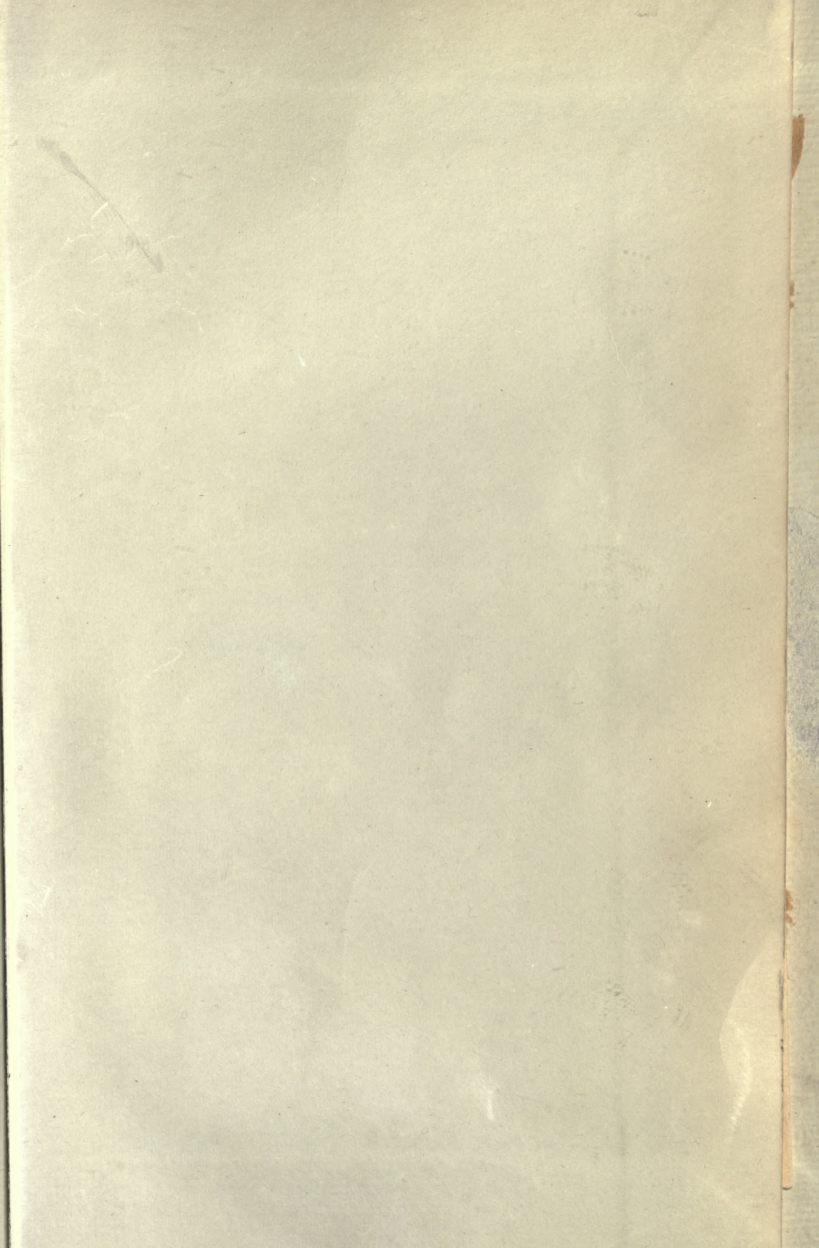
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